THE ORACLES OF THE MOST WISE EMPEROR LEO

&

THE TALE OF THE TRUE EMPEROR

(AMSTELODAMENSIS GRAECUS VI E 8)

SAPIENTISSIMI IMPERATORIS LEONIS ORACULA

&

ANONYMI NARRATIO DE VERO IMPERATORE

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THE TALE OF THE TRUE EMPEROR

(AMSTELODAMENSIS GRAECUS VI E 8)

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TEXT, TRANSLATION AND INTRODUCTION

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IN HONOUR OF PROF. DR A.F. VAN GEMERT
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

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PREFACE

In the year 2000 Arnold van Gemert intimated to his friends and colleagues his wish to retire and to be accorded emeritus status in November 2002, at the age of sixty-four. He has served the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* for more than thirty-five years, first as an academic staff member and then, from 1996 to the present day, as head of the Section of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies (formerly known as 'Byzantijns-Nieuwgrieks Seminarium'). Arnold van Gemert is the third professor of our section, after G.H. Blanken (1954-1972) and W.F. Bakker (1972-1995).

During the years of his outstanding academic career, Arnold devoted his time and talents to moulding the section into an institute of international renown. Throughout these long years his commitment has been essential in many ways, but foremost in developing the institute, building up the library, professionalizing the curriculum, creating a centre of research, and establishing a network of contacts abroad and in the Netherlands.

Although Arnold's decision to retire one year ahead of schedule was no secret, it apparently did not immediately dawn upon us what this entailed, for it was not until the autumn of 2001 that we (his colleagues and friends) started to think about the *Festschrift* he so much deserved. At our very first meeting, where we discussed what would be the best way to express our gratitude for all he had done for our institute, it was already clear to all of us that a great scholar and passionate reader like Arnold deserves a scholarly publication: a BOOK. But what sort of book? Arnold is interested in almost any subject, provided it is not too classical (in his 1973 PhD thesis, he confessed to his professor of Ancient Greek that he was actually interested in a text only if it contained obvious elements of post-classical and thus vulgar Greek). Finally we decided to publish the contents of the Amstelodamensis Graecus VI E 8, a precious manuscript at our University Library, which contains the texts of the *Oracles of Leo* and the *Tale of the True Emperor*. We hope that these texts are post-classical enough for Arnold's taste.

An additional plus was that this seemed a project that could easily be completed within one year. Little did we know! As it turned out, the edition of ms. VI E 8 presented many difficulties: not only the Greek text itself, but also the interpretation of this rather obscure prophetic material gave us quite a lot of trouble. Once we had inspected the manuscript and scrutinized its contents, we knew that we were in over our heads, in the deep and muddy waters of philology – but lucky for us, we did emerge in the end. And this is the report of our underwater experiences.

The manuscript is rightly considered to be one of the jewels of the collection of the University Library of Amsterdam. It is also the manuscript Lambeck used for his edition of the *Oracles of Leo* and the *Tale of the True Emperor*. And as Lambeck's edition was

reprinted in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* (albeit with some considerable changes), it is fair to say that the scholarly world knows these two texts in the version of ms. VI E 8. Lambeck's edition, however, is not entirely satisfactory. This alone is reason enough to justify a new edition of these two texts.

The edition and translation of the texts were entrusted to the following contributors: Joke Aalberts and Arthur Bot: ff. 7^{v}, 8^{r}, 8^{v} and 12^{v}; Ireen Beijerman and Walter Brokkaar: ff. 1^{v}, 2^{r} and 2^{v}; Walter Brokkaar: ff. 10^{r} and 10^{v}; Walter Brokkaar and Pinelopi Motsenigou: ff. 4^{v} 5^{r} and 5^{v}; Walter Brokkaar and Sonia Stamboulidou: f. 9^{r}; Marjolijne Janssen and Marc Lauxtermann: ff. 3^{r}, 3^{v}, 4^{r}, 11^{r} and 11^{v}; Tatiana Markaki and Marietje Wennekendonk: ff. 6^{r}, 6^{v}, 7^{r} and 12^{r}. Walter Brokkaar, Marjolijne Janssen and Marc Lauxtermann checked the Greek text and the translation. The introduction was written by Daniël Koster and Walter Brokkaar (I Manuscript), Marc Lauxtermann and Marjolijne Janssen (II Oracles and Tale), and Walter Brokkaar (III Language). The index was compiled by Walter Brokkaar and Pinelopi Motsenigou (with the help of Marc Lauxtermann), and the bibliography by Walter Brokkaar. Marjolijne Janssen prepared the book for printing and Walter Brokkaar supervised the edition as a whole. Needless to say, each individual author is responsible for his own contribution.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following persons: Jeannine Vereecken for providing us with a copy of several pages of her still unpublished dissertation; Katerina Kyriakou for sending us her book on the illuminated oracles; Paul Magdalino and Eva de Vries-van der Velden for valuable comments on the second chapter of the introduction; Jos Biemans for useful information concerning the manuscript; Paul Dijstelberge for photographing the manuscript; and Wim Bakker, Dia Philippides and Richard Kweskin for correcting our English. We should like to thank the University Library of Amsterdam for granting us permission to publish the pictures of ms. VI E 8 and providing us with help in every possible way. We are also extremely grateful to the Executive Board of the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* and to the Department of Language and Literature of the Faculty of Humanities for supplying a substantial part of the funds necessary for this publication.

Universiteit van Amsterdam,
September 2002

W.G.B.

INTRODUCTION

I THE MANUSCRIPT VI E 8, BIBLIOTHECA UNIVERSITATIS AMSTELODAMENSIS

Ms. VI E 8 is listed as no. 70 in the general catalogue of manuscripts of the University Library of Amsterdam; this is why the manuscript is usually, but incorrectly, named Amstelodamensis Graecus 70. Ms. VI E 8 contains a collection of oracles. Τοῦ σοφωτάτου βασιλέως Λέοντος Χρησμοί, which tradition attributes to the Byzantine emperor Leo VI (886-912), known as the Wise, but which was probably compiled during the first half of the thirteenth century. The *Oracles of Leo* are followed by an anonymous text, christened by Petrus Lambecius, its first editor, Ἀνωνύμου Παράφρασις τῶν τοῦ βασιλέως Λέοντος χρησμῶν, i.e. a paraphrase of the said oracles. In the present edition this text is called *Tale of the True Emperor*.

I.1 EARLIER DESCRIPTIONS

In modern times the manuscript was described for the first time by H. Omont:

"Leonis VI. imperatoris oracula.

Fol. 1. † Τοῦ σοφωτάτου βασιλέως Λέοντος χρησμοὶ. Τὴν ἐχθροποιὸν ἔνδοθεν κρύπτει ... – ... (Fol. 9.) Περὶ τοῦ θρηλλουμένου πτωχοῦ ... ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἄκρᾳ τῆς Βυζαντίδος. Ὁ ἀληθινὸς βασιλεὺς ... τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐμφορηθείς.

† Ἡ τοιαύτη γραφὴ μετεγραφὴ (sic) ἀπὸ παλαιώτατον βιβλίον ὡς λέγεται εἶναι γραφὴ χρόνων υ΄ καὶ ἐπέκεινα.

A chaque page, jusqu' au fol. 8 inclus, se trouvent des peintures assez grossières. – Cf. le pamphlet hollandais: Prophetien, of voorseggingen der beyde Keyseren Severi en Leonis, die beyde in Orienten geregeert hebben ... met vele kopere Figuren verciert. t'Amsterdam, Broer Jansz, 1640, in-4°, IV–43 pages. Les gravures sur cuivre de ce volume ont été faites d'après les peintures du manuscrit.

XVIe siècle. Papier. 11 feuillets. 222 sur 160 millim. Rel. parchemin"[1].

The second description is by M.B. Mendes da Costa:

"a. LEO VI DE WIJZE, Τοῦ σοφωτάτου βασιλέως Λέοντος χρησμοί.

b. [ΑΝΩΝΥΜΟΥ ΠΑΡΑΦΡΑΣΙΣ τῶν τοῦ βασιλέως Λέοντος χρησμῶν].

[1] Omont, Catalogue, pp. 197-198, no. 7 (16).

Hs. uit de 16e eeuw. Met gekleurde figuren. – Aan het einde der paraphrase staat: ἡ τοιαύτη γραφὴ μετεγράφη ἀπὸ παλαιώτατον βιβλίον ὡς λέγεται εἶναι γραφὴ χρόνων υ΄ καὶ ἐπέκεινα. – 12 bln. 4°. VI E 8

Dit hs. door G. Dousa uit Constantinopel medegebracht, werd reeds uitgegeven door JAN. RUTGERSIUS, Variarum lect. ll. VI (a. 1618), p. 467 sqq. – P. LAMBECIUS heeft het gebruikt voor zijn uitgave dezer orakels, achter GEORGIUS CODINUS, *Excerpta de antiquitatibus Constantinopolitanis*, Parisiis 1655; hij heeft daarin ook de figuren, hoewel niet nauwkeurig, overgenomen. – Nog vrijer nagevolgd zijn de figuren in: *Prophetien of Voorseggingen der beyde Keyseren Severi en Leonis*, enz., Amsterdam 1627"[2].

The third description is found in Jeannine Vereecken's unpublished dissertation:

"Amstelodamensis Graecus 70 (= hs. 1)
16de eeuw, papier 222 x 160 mm, 12 ff.
§ Inhoud
1. (1^{v}-9^{r}) <Leo VI*: Χρησμοί> met miniaturen (PG 107, 1129-1140; 1151-1158) - (9^{v}) leeg.
2. (10^{r}-12^{v}) ANONYMUS: Παράφρασις τῶν τοῦ βασιλέως Λέοντος χρησμῶν. (PG 107, 1141-1150)"[3].

Finally, the fourth description was made by Katerina Kyriakou:

"Amstel. Bibl. Univ. VI. E. 8 Ις΄ αἰώνας
Χάρτ. 22 x 15,7 ἐκ. φφ iii + 1^{r} - 12^{v} + VI"[4].

I.2 THE MANUSCRIPT[5]

The manuscript is about 222 millimetres by 160°. It is bound in a parchment cover. The manuscript consists of one quire of paper, which comprises seven bifolia, foliated 1 to 14. It furthermore contains twelve flyleaves, the first two (ff. [i + ii]) and the last two (ff. [19 + 20]) of which are glued to the inner side of the cover; the first six flyleaves are not numbered and only the first four of the last six flyleaves are foliated 15 to 18[7]. In short, the manuscript consists of the following: vi + 14 + vi.

The watermark of ff. 1 to 14 (the manuscript proper) shows a pilgrim and resembles both Briquet no. 7590 (1569) and no. 7603 (1561)[8]. So we may assume that the manuscript was written at some date after 1561 or 1569, but before November 21, 1597, when Georgius Dousa, who had purchased the manuscript in Constantinople, left for Holland (see below). If it was Georgius Dousa who ordered the manuscript to be written when he stayed in Constantinople, the *terminus post quem* shifts to April 1597.

The paper of the flyleaves shows a different watermark, which strongly resembles Briquet no. 1371 (1599; an eagle without a crown), but also shows some similarity to Briquet no. 1370 (1595-1596)[9]. As this type of paper circulated rather widely in Holland, it is reasonable to assume that the flyleaves were added in Holland when the manuscript was bound. As paper was generally used shortly after being produced, the parchment cover probably dates from c. 1600. The *terminus post quem* is May 1598, when Georgius Dousa arrived in Holland.

The text is written in black ink by one hand[10]. At first glance the text appears to have been arranged around the watercolour illuminations, but here and there the illuminations have obliterated some of the characters. Therefore we can be fairly certain that the painting was done after the writing. However, when using a magnifying glass, it is quite obvious that, before the text was written, the pictures were roughed out with blacklead to indicate where the illuminator was supposed to paint.

I.3 CONTENTS

For f. [ii^{v}] see note 2. On f. [iii^{r}] is written: "Leonis Sapientis, Imperatoris Oracula,

[2] Mendes da Costa, *Handschriften*, p. 15, no. 70. A copy of this description has been glued to the inner side of the front-cover.

"*Prophetien of Voorseggingen der beyde Keyseren Severi en Leonis*, enz., Amsterdam 1627" was reprinted in 1640, and it is to this reprint that Omont (see footnote 1) refers in his description of the manuscript.

[3] Vereecken, *Orakels*, p. 9.

[4] Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*, p. 61 sq. The number of folia is actually not 21, but 22 or rather 26 (see below).

[5] Dr Jos A.A.M. Biemans, Curator of Manuscripts at the University Library of Amsterdam, was of great help to us in writing this part of the introduction. We thank him very much for his assistance.

[6] However, according to M. Peereboom (in: Koster, *Hellen's land*, p. 250), the size of the manuscript is 23.0 centimetres by 16.0 by 1.0 and, according to Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*, p. 61, 22 centimetres by 15.7.

[7] Vereecken, *Orakels*, p. 9, reports that, when she examined the manuscript (before 1986), only the folia 1, 10 and 11 were numbered. The other folia may have been numbered in 1993 or in 1995, when the ms. was exhibited in Amsterdam and in Athens respectively. As fol. 4 had come loose at that time and the librarian in charge obviously was not well informed about the way in which the oracles followed one another, it was numbered on both sides with blacklead with the cipher 4.

[8] See Briquet, *Filigranes* II, p. 416: No. 7590: "31,5 x 44. Provence, 1569. A. Bouches-du-Rhône: *Collect. de pap. filigr*". No. 7603: "31,5 x 44. Marseille, 1561. Genève, *Ms. franc.* 197[aa]: *Papiers des Eglises reformées*, portef. 2".

[9] See Briquet, *Filigranes* I, p. 112: No. 1370: "33 x 43. Soleure, 1595-96. Ibid.: *id.* Var. simil.: Utrecht, 1599; Dôle, 1605". No. 1371: "32,5 x 42. Loosduinen, 1599. La Haye, Rijksarch.: *Papierenverzameling*. Var. simil.: Rhijnsburg, 1600. Les filigr. 1367 à 1371 sont à la marque personnelle des Düring".

[10] The manuscript lacks any explicit reference to its date and place of production. Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*, p. 62, assumes on the basis of the handwriting that its scribe was Theodosios Zygomalas. If so, the manuscript must have been written in the Levant, probably Constantinople itself. For Zygomalas, see below, the main text.

// Graece, adjectis figuris pictis illustrata. // Hoc scriptum exemplar memorat Fabricius // Bibliothecae Graecae Vol. VI. p. 363"[11]. Ff. [iii^{v}-vi^{v}] are blank.

F. 1^{r} bears the stamp of the University Library of Amsterdam. At the bottom of the page attentive readers stumble upon the name of the (second) owner Petrus Scriverius: "P. Scriverij" and in the middle of the same page, just above the stamp, they may discern the title: "† τοῦ σοφωτάτου βασιλέως λέοντος χρησμοί"[12].

Ff. 1^{v}-9^{r} present us with the text of sixteen oracles. On f. 9^{v} (otherwise empty) we read in the margin, almost certainly written by Georgius Dousa: "Oraculu(m) de restituti- // one Constantinopolis // Leonis Imp. quaere // in fine Annaliu(m) Const. // Manassis"[13]. On ff. 10^{r}-12^{v}, one finds what Lambecius called the anonymous paraphrase of the oracles[14]. The copyist finished his work with the statement[15]: "† ἡ τοιαύτη γραφὴ μετεγράφη ἀπὸ παλαιώτατον βιβλίον ὡς λέγεται εἶναι γραφὴ χρόνων υ΄ καὶ ἐπέκεινα : †".

Ff. 13 and 14 are blank and so are the flyleaves, ff. 15^{r} to [19^{r}].

I.4 HISTORY

The manuscript was almost certainly purchased by Georgius Dousa (Joris van der Does) in Constantinople in 1597, so it seems proper to start our story with a short biography of his short, but adventurous life.

Georgius Dousa (1574-1599)[16] was the second son of Johan van der Does, better known as Janus Dousa, an important politician and humanist and the first 'curator' of the University of Leyden. Janus Dousa had five other sons: Johan, Steven, Frans, Warner (or Werner or Wernaert), and Dirk or Theodorus, as he used to call himself. All together they were known in academic circles as the 'Pleias Dousica'[17].

After he had finished his studies – he learned Latin and Greek from his father – Georgius left for Poland, where he stayed for two years (1592-1594). Shortly after his

[11] Corrected with pencil into 364. Johann Albert Fabricius (1668-1736) read theology, philology and medicine at Leipzig. A professor of philosophy and rhetorics at the Academical Gymnasium in Hamburg during 37 years, he compiled among other things the *Bibliotheca Graeca*, an extensive collection of biographical and bibliographical material of classical and Byzantine Greek literature from Homer to the fall of Constantinople in fourteen volumes. See *NDB*, IV, pp. 732-733 (Heinrich Reincke).

[12] Vereecken, *Orakels*, p. 12, assumes that it was Scriverius who wrote the title.

[13] For the text of this oracle, see e.g. Lambecius, Oracula 1655, pp. 279-280; idem, Oracula 1863, pp. 1149-1150.

[14] The editio princeps of the oracles, published by Rutgersius in 1618, did not include the paraphrase. The first to publish the text was Lambecius (Oracula 1655).

[15] This phrase is omitted in the first edition (Lambecius, Oracula 1655) as well as in the reprint by J.P. Migne (Lambecius, Oracula 1863).

[16] See Van der Aa, *Biogr. wdbk*, IV, pp. 221-222 and Molhuysen, *Nieuw biogr. wdbk*, VI, pp. 418-419.

[17] Heesakkers, Scriverius, p. 106.

return, he and his brothers Johan and Steven planned to travel to the Ottoman Empire in order to visit Greece, but they first went to Germany in 1596. Living for three months in Heidelberg, Georgius studied the Greek and Latin manuscripts of the local library, with the assistance of the librarian Paulus Melissus, and he was introduced to Georgius Codinus' work on the antiquities of Constantinople by the scholar Marquardus Freherus (the latinized form of Freher). After having prepared the manuscript of Codinus for publication, he was informed in the summer of the same year that a Polish embassy would travel to Constantinople, so he returned the manuscript to Freher, who published this work of Codinus later in that year[18], and left for Cracow.

Although the Polish mission was cancelled, Georgius continued his journey and arriving in Leopolis (Lvov, in Ukraine), he joined some Turkish and Armenian merchants, who were travelling to the Ottoman capital. He reached Constantinople in April 1597. As the Dutch Republic at that time did not have diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire, the young scholar was lodged with Eduard Barton, the English ambassador. During his visit he became acquainted with several members of the Greek orthodox hierarchy, among whom Meletios Pegas (1549-1601), the patriarch of Alexandria[19], and Theodosios Zygomalas (1544-ca. 1614)[20], who originated from Nauplia in the Peloponnese, and who was at the time πρωτονοτάριος τῆς ἐκκλησίας Κωνσταντινουπόλεως[21]. Important, also, was his acquaintance with Georgios Kantakouzenos[22], because of his library, "l'une des plus célèbres collections de Constantinople"[23]. Through these three Greeks he came into possession of several Greek manuscripts[24].

[18] *Georgii Codini Selecta de Originibus Constantinopolitanis Graece et Latine, per Georgium Dousam*, Heidelberg 1596. This edition also contains the *Liber de Signis, statuis et aliis spectatu dignis Constantinopoli*, another work by Codinus that had been translated by Dousa.

[19] In 1597 and 1598 Meletios Pegas (Μελέτιος Πηγᾶς) was the overseer of the oecumenical patriarchal throne. He was the uncle of Kyrillos Loukaris (1572-1638), the patriarch of Alexandria from 1601 to 1620 and the future 'protestant' oecumenical patriarch.

[20] Theodosios Zygomalas (Θεοδόσιος Ζυγομαλᾶς) was the son of the scholar Ioannis Zygomalas. At the age of nineteen, he already was the foremost assistant of his father. He copied many manuscripts and sold them to European scholars. He was on good terms with Stefan Gerlach (1546-1612), a well-known theologian of those days, and corresponded regularly with the famous German scholar Martin Crusius (1526-1607). He translated Τὰ κατὰ Στεφανίτην καὶ Ἰχνηλάτην from Byzantine into modern Greek. Zygomalas may have been the scribe of the Amsterdam manuscript (see above, footnote 10).

[21] That is to say, he held a position in the patriarchal chancellery as first secretary; it is not easy to establish how high this position was at the time. See Beck, *Kirche*, p. 99.

[22] For Georgios Kantakouzenos (Γεώργιος Καντακουζηνός), see Foerster, *Commentatio* and Papazoglou, *Βιβλιοθῆκες*, passim.

[23] Omont, Crusius, p. 68.

[24] Omont, Crusius, p. 68 sq., also published an agreement between Dousa and Kantakouzenos concerning the publication of three manuscripts copied from his library: Ὁμολογῶ ἐγὼ Γεώργιος Δουσιάδης πῶς ἔλαβον ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ τιμίου ἄρχοντος κυρίου Γεωργίου Καντακουζηνοῦ τὸ ἴσον τῆς ἐγγράφου ἱστορίας, ἣν συνέγραψε Γεώργιος λογοθέτης περὶ ἁλώσεως

Because of the death of his elder brother Johan, Georgius returned to the Netherlands earlier than he had planned. He left the Ottoman capital on the November 21, 1597 and arrived in the Dutch Republic in May 1598. He wrote an account of his journey to the Ottoman capital, which was published in Leyden in 1599[25]. In October of the same year he died prematurely on the island of Sao Tome while accompanying his uncle Pieter van der Does, who had been sent to the Western African coast on an expedition against the Spanish and the Portuguese by the Dutch government.

∴

In 1598 a letter of consolation was published, written in Latin and dated October 23, 1597, from Meletios Pegas to Janus Dousa. This edition is of great interest for the history of philology, for it contains, on the reverse of the title page, a catalogue of the manuscripts Georgius Dousa had collected in Constantinople. Among the 21 items are two works of emperor Leo VI, numbered 11 and 12: "Leonis Imp. Oracula" and "ejusdem de virtutibus agriculturae sive de vitae solitariae institutione 190. Capita"[26].

After Georgius' death in 1599, his library apparently passed into the hands of his younger brother Theodorus (1580-1663). In 1614 he published Akropolites' chronicle on the basis of one of the manuscripts his elder brother had brought with him from the Levant[27]. In his preface to the reader ("Theodorus Dousa Ad lectorem") he informs us that Zygomalas had been the copyist of the chronicle: "Repertum olim Galata (Pera vulgo) redemptumque a Georgio Cantacuzeno, ex cujus libro apographum transcriptum fuit manu Theodosii Zygomalae Nauplii, ex petitione Domini Georgii fratris mei P.M., qui

Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ὑπὸ Λατίνων, καὶ αὖθις παρὰ Λατίνων ὑπὸ Γραίκων, καὶ ἕτερον Μιχαὴλ Κηδιωτοῦ ἐξ ἀρχῆς κόσμου μέχρις Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ, ἅπερ ἔλαβον ἀγαθῇ πίστει ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα φροντίσω ἐκτυπωθῆναι, καὶ παρέξω αὐτῷ ἐαν ἐκτυπωθῶσιν τὸ ἥμισυ τοῦ κέρδους ἀπὸ τῶν τυπωθησομένων βιβλίων, καὶ ἐκτελέσω τὸ κρεῖττον καὶ συμφερότερον διὰ τὸ κοινὸν κέρδος ἡμῶν καὶ ποιήσω πρῶτον τυπωθῆναι ταῦτα τὰ βιβλία, ἵνα ταχύτερον ἐκτελεσθῶσιν. ... Ἔλαβον καὶ ἕτερον Ἰχνηλάτην καὶ Στεφανίτην λεγόμενον καὶ τοῦτο ὡς ἄνωθεν τὸ κέρδος ... See also Molhuysen, *Cod. Vulc.*, p. 37, no. 93, where on f. 1[r], in rather inarticulate Greek, a biographical note is written: Τὸ πάρον βίβλιον ἐδόθη εἰς τυπωγραφίαν παρὰ γεωργίου καντακουζήνου, υἱοῦ ἀντωνίου καντακουζήνου, τοῦ καὶ τὸν ἰωάννην ζωνάραν δόσαντος εἰς τυπωγραφίαν πρότερον. See further Papazoglou, Σταμπάδα βιβλία; Legrand, *Bibl. hellénique*, IV, pp. 352-353 and Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*, p. 92.

[25] Dousa, G., *De itinere*, pp. 5-90. In the same volume Georgius published a short biography of Meletios Pegas in Latin (pp 108-111), as well as the letter of condolence (in Latin) Pegas wrote to Janus Dousa on the occasion of the death of his son Johan (pp. 112-121) and a Greek letter of Pegas to Georgius himself (pp. 122-123; Latin translation: pp 124-125). For an extensive description of the itinerary and bibliography, see Yerasimos, *Voyageurs*, pp. 425-426.

[26] Meletius, *Epistola*. This letter was reprinted in Dousa, G., *De itinere* (see the previous footnote). See also Omont, Crusius, p. 70 and Legrand, *Bibl. hellénique*, IV, p. 346.

[27] In his edition Theodorus Dousa announced that he would also publish the other manuscripts collected by his brother, but he did not fulfill this promise.

auctorem illum inter alios Constantinopoli superioribus annis attulit"[28]. Theodorus probably sold or donated a part of Georgius' collection to Bonaventura Vulcanius (1538-1614)[29], a professor of Greek and Latin at Leyden University and a friend of the Dousa family, for several entries in the catalogue of the Vulcanius collection refer to Georgius Dousa and Theodosios Zygomalas[30].

Far more significant, however, is the fact that on one of the flyleaves on the front side of the manuscript Vulc. 64, almost certainly in the hand of Georgius Dousa, is written a table of contents in which the oracles of Leo the Wise are mentioned again, this time together with another work of the philosopher emperor[31].

Wilh. Weinberger equally asssumes that ms. Vulc. 64 (as well as two other ones) once belonged to Georgius Dousa. According to him, several folia have been removed from this manuscript[32] and as one of the two works of the emperor Leo which Georgius took with him from Constantinople (namely, the *De virtutibus agriculturae sive de vitae solitariae institutione 190 capita*) is included in the manuscript, while the other (the *Oracles of Leo*) is missing, he is reasonably certain that ms. VI E 8 originally formed

[28] Dousa, Th., *Acropolita*. Cf. Omont, Crusius, pp. 67-68.

[29] Vulcanius is the latinized form of De Smet. He was born in Bruges in 1538 and studied at Ghent and Louvain. In 1578, after a long sojourn in Spain (1559-1570) and Switzerland (1574-1577), he was assigned to the post of rector of the Latin School at Antwerp. He became acquainted with Janus Dousa in 1578. Although he was appointed professor of Greek at the University of Leyden on February 1, 1578, he did not take up office until 1581. In 1584 he published the works of Callimachus.

[30] See the letter of K.A. de Meyier, the keeper of the mss., to J. Stolpe of the University of Göteborg, *dd.* September 25, 1963, attached to ms. Vulc. 64. See also Molhuysen, *Cod. Vulc.*, p. 8, no. 17, f. 70[v] "Subscriptio codicis Georgii Acropolitae Chronicorum quem iubente Georgio Dousa descripsit Theodosius Zygomalas – qui codex nunc est in bibl. senatoria Lipsiensi (cf. Naumanni Catalogus p. 10 n°. XXX. Heisenberg in Eranos II (1891) p. 117-9) – a Vulcanio descripta". Ibidem 27, no. 62 I, f. 36[r]-37[r] "Apographa duarum Epistolarum a Maximo Archidiacono Alexandriae ad Georgium Dousam datarum, graece quas descripsit Vulcanius in cod. Vulc. 17 f. 70". Ibidem 28, no. 64 II, f. 8[r]-39[r] "Leonis Sapientis de Instituendis monachis capita CXC". In the margin of f. 8[r] there is another reference to Zygomalas: ἀξιῶ ταῦτα τυπωθῆναι. εἰσὶ γὰρ χρειώδη γραικοῖς. Θεοδόσιος Ζυγομαλᾶς ναύπλιος τῆς πελοποννήσου δικαιοφύλαξ καὶ πρωτονοτάριος τῆς ἐκκλησίας κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ πατριαρχαίου (sic).

[31] "In hoc volumine continentur Gregorii Nysseni, de Hierosolymitanis peregrinatoribus, oratio; Georgii Logothete de Constantinopoli a Latinis Capta, historia; Leonis Imperatoris Agricultura Euangelica, eiusdem Oracula; Pselli Aenigmata, eiusdem Dioptra id est Corporis & animae dialogus; Alcidamantis, Gorgiae, Antisthenis declamationes". We compared the hand of the writer with that of Georgius Dousa in a number of letters found in the collection of the Department of Manuscripts of the University of Leyden (VL. 64 and VL. 106).

[32] Molhuysen, *Cod. Vulc.*, p. 28, no. 64, disagrees with Weinberger: "Post f. 7 unum folium deest; non tamen sunt exsecta Oracula Leonis, quae nunc sunt in bibl. Amstelodamensi (Catalogus der Handschr. II, 1902 p. 69 n°. 70), ut Weinberger, Studien zur Hss.kunde p. 6, neutro codice inspecto, statuit. Unum tantum folium, scriptura vacans ut videtur, exsectum".

part of ms. Vulc. 64[33]. Moreover, Weinberger ascertained that the measurements of both manuscripts are identical: ms. VI E 8 is ca. 222 millimetres by 160 and ms. Vulc. 64 is 22 centimetres by 16. Considering all this evidence, he comes to the conclusion that ms. VI E 8 is the manuscript of the oracles that Georgius Dousa brought from Constantinople to Holland in 1597/1598[34].

We may add that the handwriting on f. 9^{v} of the ms. VI E 8 is very similar to that of Georgius Dousa. When we also take into consideration that Rutgersius (1589-1625)[35] declared in the preface to his *editio princeps* of the Greek text[36] that he got the manuscript from his friend Scriverius (1576-1660)[37], a prolific philologist, historian and poet, who, according to Rutgersius, had received the manuscript from one of Georgius Dousa's brothers (it was certainly Theodorus), it is very tempting to declare that ms. VI E 8 is the source for the *editio princeps*.

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It is not known when exactly the City Library of Amsterdam came into possession of the manuscript. It appears with its full title for the first time in a catalogue of the Library in 1796[38], but it must have entered the collection much earlier. Rummaging through the older catalogues, we did not find the manuscript mentioned in 1612 and

[33] This may have been done when the manuscript of the oracles was presented to Scriverius. See below.

[34] Weinberger, Cod. Vulc., pp. 809-810.

[35] Janus Rutgersius (the latinized name of Johan Rutgers, 1589-1625) was a pupil of the well-known scholar Vossius. He studied at the University of Leyden and was a pupil of Scaliger, Heinsius and Baudius. He became a diplomat, serving not only the Dutch Republic but also the Swedish king Gustaph Adolph. Apart from his diplomatic career, he also excelled as a poet and classical philologist.

[36] Rutgersius, Oracula, p. 467: "Haec Oracula nobis donavit V.C." [= Vir Clarissimus] "ac longo amicitiae usu mihi conjunctissimus Petrus Scriverius, cum ea a Nobilissimis Douzis ipse accepisset; quorum frater Georgius cum alijs quibusdam Graecis libris Constantinopoli attulit. Interpretationem ipsius Georgij adjecimus, sed alicubi a nobis castigatam. Nam Versiones quae ex Italia prodierunt, tales sunt, ut, quod vulgo dicitur, neque coelum, neque terram tangant. Iconas studio omisimus, quod eae saepius jam recusae sunt. Nobis satis est Auctorem sua lingua loquentem dedisse. Neque enim, quod ego sciam, usquam adhuc Graece prodijt. Audiamus".

[37] After his primary education at the Latin school in Haarlem, Petrus Scriverius (the latinized name of Pieter Schrijver, 1576-1660) started to study Law at Leyden University in 1593, but he switched to Humanities in 1596. He was highly esteemed by Bonaventura Vulcanius and Paulus Merula, his teachers in rhetoric and history. He also studied with Justus Scaliger. Among his special friends were Johannes Meursius, Janus Rutgersius and Janus Dousa's sons Georgius, Frans and Theodorus. See Van der Aa, *Biogr. wdbk*, XVII, pp. 583-591 and Tuynman, Scriverius, passim.

[38] See *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1796*, p. 229, no. 44 (one of the fourteen manuscripts in quarto): "Leonis *Sapientis* Oracula; Graece: additis pictis figuris illustrata. Hoc scriptum exemplar memorat *Fabricius* in Biblioth. Graec. Vol. VI, pag. 363".

1622[39]. However, in the catalogues of 1668 and 1711 we came across the laconic entry: "Leonis Vaticinia Graece", among the few "Libri manuscripti in Quarto" (nine in 1668 and twelve in 1711)[40]. There can be no doubt, we think, that this is our manuscript, which means that the VI E 8 has been noticed and 'described' for the first time in 1668.

The result is consistent with one of the few things we know for certain: the manuscript was in the Library of Amsterdam in 1645, for in that year the young scholar Peter Lambeck (better known to the scholarly world as Petrus Lambecius) came from Hamburg to Holland to study Greek manuscripts in Amsterdam and Leyden[41]. In the preface to his edition of the *Oracles of Leo*[42], written in Paris on September 20, 1650, he stated that he based himself on Rutgersius' edition and on an "antiquo Codice MS. Bibliothecae Amsterodamensis"[43]. According to Lambecius, who is followed by Vereecken[44], the edition and the manuscript differ so much from each other that the manuscript cannot have been the source for the Greek *editio princeps*.

This raises the question whether around 1615 there existed two manuscripts of the

[39] See *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1612* and *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1622*. This is hardly surprising, though. In all likelihood, the manuscript was still in the library of Scriverius or Rutgersius at the time.

[40] *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1668*, 83 and in *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1711*, 102.

[41] Lambecius (1628-1680) also studied at Paris, Rome and Toulouse. After his return to Hamburg he taught history at the gymnasium there from 1651 and became rector of the same school in 1660. In 1660 he was also admitted to the degree of Doctor Utriusque Iuris at Bourges. Because of personal problems he left Hamburg and went to Vienna and Rome, where he was converted to Catholicism. After having settled in Vienna in 1662, he was assigned to the post of librarian of the imperial library by emperor Leopold I. He thoroughly reorganized the library and managed to build up an impressive collection. He became a man of such influence that after his death even Leibniz was interested in the post. See *NDB*, XIII, pp. 426-427 (Gebhard König).

[42] For an excellent description of the edition by Lambecius, see Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*, pp. 96-98. She points out that the pictures in Lambecius' edition do not derive from the Amsterdam manuscript, but from earlier Parisian editions of the *Oracles of Leo* (namely, the Artus edition of 1612 and the Mezeray edition of 1650).

[43] Lambecius, Oracula 1655, p. 235: "Ne quid omnino deesset corpori Historiae Byzantinae, necessario ei inserenda esse duxi imperatoris Leonis cognomine Sapientis Oracula cum picturis fatidicis, quibus futuros Constantinopolitani Imperij casus portendi vulgo opinio est. Primus vero ea Graece & Latine in lucem edidit Janus Rutgersius Variarum Lectionum lib. V, cap. 8. Quam editionem ego, cum abhinc quadriennio in Batavia degerem, contuli cum antiquo Codice MS. Bibliothecae Amsterodamensis, quem ille non viderat: nec paucas inde satis magni momenti variantes lectiones excerpsi, quas reperies in meis Annotationibus. Praeterea in eodem codice inveni anonymi cuiusdam Oraculorum Leonis Graecam Paraphrasin, quam ob argumenti similitudinem una edendam esse duxi. Sed nondum satis mihi constat, sitne haec eadem atque illa Theophili Presbyteri Expositio Oraculorum Leonis, quae in Bibliotheca Vaticana asservari dicitur. Quod superest, benevole Lector, hunc quoque laborem meum boni consule; qui si minus accuratus tibi videbitur, propterea saltem mihi ignoscas, quia vix integri tridui spatio in itinere mihi sub manu natus est. Vale. Lutetiae Parisiorum anno M. DC. L., die XX Septembris".

[44] Vereecken, *Orakels*, pp. 10-11.

Oracles of Leo in Holland or just one. If the second option is true, we are confronted with a puzzle we cannot solve. But if the first is true, it seems likely that Scriverius made (or had made) a not very accurate copy of the Dousa manuscript and gave it to his friend Rutgersius, either without telling him it was a copy or, so much the worse, telling him it was the Dousa manuscript[45].

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Finally, we have to try to answer the question how the present VI E 8 found its way to the Library of Amsterdam. We know that Scriverius lived the greater part of his life in Leyden, but "Scriverius was more than at home in the Amsterdam library. As a boy he had made a transcription of the Amsterdam Photius codex[46], which his friend Janus Rutgersius published in 1618"[47]. In this context the suggestion has been made that it was Scriverius who defrayed the costs of the publication of the first catalogue of the

[45] The odds are very high that the manuscript Rutgersius had at his disposal did not include the *Tale of the True Emperor*, because, if it did, Rutgersius certainly would have published it or else would have told us that he had left it out, just as he tells us (see note 36) that he omitted the illuminations and that he corrected the Latin version. If we are right, the present ms. VI E 8 is the original manuscript, which was given to Scriverius by the Dousa family.

The copy of the manuscriptScriverius made for Rutgersius must have disappeared. In the catalogues of the auctions of the large library of Scriverius, which took place on April 3rd and August 8th of 1663, this manuscript copy is not mentioned.

It is curious, but not very relevant for the story told here, that some fragments of the *Oracles* and the *Tale* happen to be found in ms. 74 K, ff. 18-20v, of the Library of Leyden University. See de Meyier, *Cod. Graeci*, p. 151. As the readings of this manuscript differ from those of ms. VI E 8, it can be ruled out that it is an apograph.

[46] For the contents of the Amsterdam Photius codex (nowadays lost), see *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1612*, p. 8 (no. 7): "Ejusdem Photij *de septem Concilijs Narratio*, & Nili *Narratiuncula de novem Conciliis: Item*, Isaacus Prophyrogenneta (sic) *de figuris et staturis Principum Graecorum, et Troianorum, qui interfuerunt bello Troiano*, et Iohannis Chrysostomi *Oratiuncula de S. Cruce. uno Vol. MS*". In *Catal. Bibl. Amst. 1622*, p. 8 (no. 7) we read about the same manuscript: "Sacrilega manu sublatus, abest".

[47] De la Fontaine, City Library, p. 188. The author correctly states that Scriverius had connections with the Library of Amsterdam, but he incorrectly avers that Scriverius had made a transcription of the Amsterdam Photius codex in his early years. It was actually Rutgersius who did so, and Rutgersius did not publish the whole codex, but only a part of it: "Hunc suavissimum libellum e bibliotheca Amsterodamensi olim pueri beneficio P. Scriverij descripsimus, cum Nili ac Photij Conciliorum Indice, qui illi in eodem volumine iuncti erant. Ac duos quidem posteriores Sedanenses, qui eos a nobis acceperant, ediderunt. Nos Isaacium nunc primi damus" (Ianus Rutgersius, *Variarum lectionum libri sex*. Lugduni Batavorum 1618, p. 509). He would have liked to consult the manuscript again, but he was informed by Scriverius that it was impossible, because it had been stolen: "Optassem ejus exemplaris copiam iterum nobis fieri potuisse. Neque enim dubito, quin, ut illa aetas erat, nonnusquam in scribendo peccaverim. Ut in Achille in fine, si tamen id vitio nostro factum est. Atque ego cum per Scriverium nostrum id tentassem, respondit se e V.C. Mathia Slado, Bibliothecae praefecto, intellexisse, id exemplar plagiariorum scelere perijsse. Pereant qui eo genere se infamant" (Ibidem, pp. 509-510).

City Library of 1612[48]. So is it too rash to suggest that he at one time or another donated his manuscript of the *Oracles of Leo* and the *Tale of the True Emperor* to the Amsterdam City Library?

[48] See De la Fontaine, City Library, pp. 185-188.

II THE ORACLES OF LEO AND THE TALE OF THE TRUE EMPEROR

The present diplomatic edition is based on a splendidly illuminated manuscript at the University Library of Amsterdam, VI E 8 (s. XVI ex.), which contains two prophetic texts, the so-called *Oracles of Leo* and the anonymous *Tale of the True Emperor*[1]. These two texts can be found in a great number of manuscripts dating from the sixteenth century, all of which present the *Tale of the True Emperor* as an annex to the *Oracles of Leo*[2]. Since the present edition is based on one manuscript only, it may seem foolish to draw firm conclusions without taking into account the whole manuscript tradition. However, as a number of manuscripts have already been edited properly[3], and as there are several excellent studies of 'the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition' (to use the term coined by Alexander)[4], it is not premature, we think, to propose at least some tentative interpretations and to suggest a possible date for most of the prophetic material found in the Amsterdam manuscript.

Although the so-called *Oracles of Leo* are doubtless as Byzantine as Byzantine can be, it is rather surprising that none of the many manuscripts that contain the texts date from before 1453. The *Oracles* appear to have become popular only when the Byzantine empire was a thing of the past and there was little chance of an emperor ever again ascending the throne of Byzantium. As the Ottoman armies marched through the Balkans and gained supremacy in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, conquering island after island, the orthodox population as well as the rest of Europe (in particular, Venice and its colonies) dreamt of the day that the Muslim hordes would be defeated and the do-

[1] In the editio princeps (Lambecius, Oracula 1655), based upon the same manuscript, P. Lambeck invented the following title for the text: 'Ανωνύμου παράφρασις τῶν τοῦ βασιλέως Λέοντος χρησμῶν. But as Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 130-136, pointed out, it is incorrect to call the text a paraphrase of the *Oracles of Leo*. Alexander himself opted for the title: "Cento of the True Emperor", because the anonymous author made use of different eschatological sources. However, as all Byzantine prophecies make use of earlier material, it hardly seems fair to single out this particular text as a cento.

[2] See Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 30 and 51.

[3] Rutgers, *Oracula*, pp. 467-484 (whether the Dousa manuscript used by Rutgers is identical to our Amsterdam manuscript, as some people aver, is still *sub iudice*). Lambecius, Oracula 1655, reprinted in *Patrologia Graeca* 107, 1130-1140 (for his edition Lambeck used Rutgers' previous edition as well as the Amsterdam manuscript). Bees, Μαρμαρωμένος Βασιλιάς, pp. 219-244γ (edition of a ms. in Berlin; Bees also makes use of an early nineteenth-century edition of a Mesolonghi ms. by a certain P. Stephanitzes [inaccessible to us]). Knös, Oracles, pp. 155-180 (edition of a ms. in Stockholm; cf. the review article by Komines, Παρατηρήσεις, pp. 398-412). A. Rigo, *Oracula Leonis. Tre manoscritti greco-veneziani degli oracoli attribuiti all' imperatore bizantino Leone il Saggio (Bodl. Baroc. 170, Marc. gr. VII. 22, Marc. gr. VII. 3)*. Padua 1988 (inaccessible to us). Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 92-136 (edition of the so-called Barozzi version). For a thorough description of the illuminated manuscripts, see Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*.

[4] Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, passim. Bees, Μαρμαρωμένος Βασιλιάς, passim. Mango, Legend, passim. Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 21-53.

minion of the Ismaelites would come to an end. There is certainly more to this anti-Islamic daydreaming than just a combination of fear and nostalgic longing for the glory that was Byzantium. It is also a patriotic urge to recover what has been lost. Whereas the *Oracles of Leo* obviously envisage a truly Christian empire, ruled either by good or bad emperors, the oppressed Greek population imagined that these oracles referred to a sequence of bad Turkish sultans, followed at the very end by the reign of the good last emperor who would liberate them. In other words, the definition of good and bad is no longer simply a question of religious beliefs and ethics, but of nationality, hiding behind the camouflage of true orthodoxy.

To return to the editorial fate of the *Oracles of Leo*, it is not only strange that all the manuscripts date from the post-Byzantine period, but also that most manuscripts present exactly the same error as regards the first oracle. As Vereecken pointed out, the manuscripts can be divided into two separate groups: the 'conservative' manuscript branch (to which most manuscripts, including the one in Amsterdam, belong) and the 'Latin' manuscript branch (to which a few Cretan manuscripts and the earliest Latin translation belong)[5]. In the conservative manuscript branch the first oracle not only misses its first two verses and its accompanying picture, but it is also combined with the second oracle, as if they were one. Since we encounter the same mistake everywhere, it follows that all the 'conservative' manuscripts ultimately go back to a common exemplar. But if almost all manuscripts go back to just one exemplar, the conclusion can only be that the *Oracles of Leo*, however popular in post-Byzantine times, were hardly known to the Byzantine public at large before 1453.

Byzantine historical sources are replete with references to oracles and prophecies predicting the future of the empire and the number of years that each individual ruler would reign. Apart from the *History* of Niketas Choniates[6], none of these sources explicitly refer to the *Oracles of Leo*, and they are accordingly of little interest to the present inquiry. Of some relevance, however, is the fact that, according to certain historical sources, illustrated books of oracles circulated during the reigns of Leo V (813-820) and Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282-1328)[7]. As the figures of these illustrated books of oracles are described in terms that do not apply to the *Oracles of Leo*, it is beyond doubt that the *Oracles of Leo* present just one example of a probably rich production of illustrated prophetic books in Byzantium. In certain Latin and Russian sources we find references to prophetic texts, either discovered by Leo the Wise or attributed to him; but

[5] Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 51-53.
[6] See Niketas Choniates, pp. 41, 10-13; 222, 68; 351, 72; 355, 8-15 and 433, 91-92.
[7] See Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 22 and 24-25.

to judge from the descriptions, these βασιλογραφεῖα ('imperial books') belong to the tradition of the so-called *Visions of Daniel*[8].

All this is 'ben poco'. Except for a few texts quoted by Niketas Choniates, which are all taken from oracles 2-5, there is no evidence that the *Oracles of Leo* were widely known in Byzantine times. This is the more surprising as the earliest Latin translation, the *Vaticinia Pontificum*, of the second half of the thirteenth century, was quite popular in the Middle Ages among critics of the papacy[9]. The earliest manuscripts of the Latin translation of the *Oracles of Leo* date from the early fourteenth century and are therefore considerably older than the Greek manuscripts. Taken in conjunction, the above data (the post-Byzantine date of all the manuscripts and the lack of evidence in Byzantine sources) strongly suggest that the *Oracles of Leo* were not known to most Byzantines. In the light of the *Vaticinia Pontificum*, one might even conjecture that the original Greek text circulated in Byzantinizing parts of the West (Sicily, Otranto, or Rome itself) and reached Byzantine territories only when Byzantium no longer existed. Although we are not art historians, we would like to point out that the eagle of the third oracle resembles the eagle of Frederick II of Sicily and that the figure of the juvenile head of the fourth oracle bears an uncanny resemblance to similar portraits in thirteenth-century Western European art.

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Previous attempts to date the *Oracles of Leo* have failed because people understandably thought that the corpus forms a coherent whole, and not a compilation of texts culled from various sources. But as will be shown below, oracles 1-6 date from shortly after 815 and oracles 7-10 from the years before and after 1204, while oracles 11-15, predicting the reign of the Last Roman Emperor, cannot be dated with any accuracy.

However, before explaining what is perfectly clear once one understands that there is no need to assume that all the oracles were written in the same period, a few words need to be said about the question of numbering. The numbering of the oracles is somewhat confusing in the manuscripts and, consequently, in the existing editions. There are three problems: oracles 1-2, oracle 3 and oracle 4. In the 'conservative' branch of the manuscript tradition oracles 1 and 2 have been merged into one, which is why the numbering of the oracles and the numbering of the texts in the editions no longer correspond. We encounter the same problem of numbering in the case of oracles 3 and 4, which are both diptychs. In most manuscripts as well as in the existing editions, both of these diptychs are presented in the form of two separate texts: 3a and 3b, 4a and 4b; needless to say,

[8] See Mango, Legend, pp. 71-73.
[9] See Mango, Legend, p. 62, Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 47-50, and Kyriakou, *Χρησμοί*, pp. 38-43.

this has led to much confusion. To make things worse, the order of 4a and 4b is reversed in most manuscripts and, sadly enough, in all of the editions.

Then there is the additional problem that the Amsterdam manuscript does not present oracles 3 through 6 in the right order. The reason is that folium 4 (oracle 4a and 4b) should be in between folium 2 (oracle 3a and 3b) and folium 3 (oracles 5 and 6), but apparently, at some point in the history of the manuscript, some librarian accidentally changed the order of the folia.

In the following table, the first column shows the original numbering of the oracles, the second the numbering of the texts in the *Patrologia Graeca* (= Lambecius, Oracula 1863), and the third the numbering of the texts in our edition of the Amsterdam manuscript.

		Edition in PG	Present Edition
oracle	1	I, 1-15	I. 1
oracle	2	I, 16-29	I. 2
oracle	3 (a+b)	II + III	II + III
oracle	4 (a+b)	V + IV	VII + VI
oracle	5	VI	IV
oracle	6	VII	V
oracle	7	VIII	VIII
oracle	8	IX	IX
oracle	9	X	X
oracle	10	XI	XI
oracle	11	XII	XII
oracle	12	XIII	XIII
oracle	13	XIV	XIV
oracle	14	XV	XV
oracle	15	XVI	XVI

Whenever we refer to the oracles, we use the original numbering (in the first column); whenever we refer to the texts themselves, we use the numbering of our edition (in the third column).

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Like all prophetic texts, the *Oracles of Leo* can be divided into two: authentic predictions of the future, and fake predictions of events that have already taken place (*vaticinia ex eventu*)[10]. The authentic predictions are oracles 11 to 15 (nos. XII-XVI); the fake predictions are oracles 1-6 (nos. I-VII) and 7-10 (nos. VIII-XI)[11]. Fake predictions can be dated quite accurately, whereas authentic predictions cannot. The former can be dated because they obviously refer to historical events; the latter cannot because they are 'wish-prophecies' (to use the term coined by Alexander), which express the hopes and anxieties of the author.

The authentic oracles, the 'wish-prophecies', predict that the true emperor will be revealed at the end of all time. Summoned to leave the rock he is living in, he will awaken as if from drunkenness. People will recognize him, although they have never seen him and thought he was dead. An angel will tell them to look for the true emperor in the western part of the city, and there they will find him hidden in a shadowy rock-cave. His cave is also called "the dwelling of the plant". He will proceed naked from his dwelling place and will be crowned emperor. During his reign, the City of seven hills (Constantinople) will regain its former glory and the whole empire will prosper as it did in the days of yore. The emperor will guide his people to the heavenly abodes – for he will be the very embodiment of all that is good. But he will not reign forever. A dark star will appear, and he will be the object of envy. In the last days, the emperor will return naked to his rock and will be considered to be dead as he was before. In the end he will obtain a place in heaven on account of his good deeds, piety and virtuous government.

All this may sound rather confusing, but almost all the details of the legend of the last emperor, as summarized in the above, can be found in numerous other texts that belong to the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition. As Paul Alexander pointed out in his seminal book on the topic, the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition incorporates many elements of Judaic, Roman and early Christian eschatological folklore. Alexander also pointed out that most Byzantine prophecies derived these bits and pieces of eschatology either from the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodios* itself (late 7th C.) or from its later adaptations, the so-called *Visions of Daniel* (8th C. and after). For example, the idea that the last emperor will be awakened as if from drunkenness or even the sleep of death, ulti-

[10] See P. Alexander, 'Medieval Apocalypses as Historical Sources', *American Historical Review* 73 (1968), pp. 997-1018 (repr. in: idem, *Religious and Historical Thought in the Byzantine Empire*. London 1978, no. XIII).

[11] See Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 34 and 39-41.

mately goes back to the Greek translation of Pseudo-Methodios' *Apocalypse* (originally written in Syriac)[12].

Almost all the details pertaining to the last emperor's reign which we find in the last five oracles can be traced back to Pseudo-Methodios and the *Visions of Daniel*. However, the belief that he dwelled in a rocky or stony environment (πέτρα) before his miraculous resuscitation, appears to be a truly Byzantine innovation, for which there is no precedent in Pseudo-Methodios or the *Visions of Daniel*. It eventually leads to the post-Byzantine myth of the μαρμαρωμένος βασιλιάς ('the enmarbled emperor')[13]. However, since traces of this myth can already be discovered in German medieval sagas that go back to Byzantine sources[14], it is beyond doubt that the belief in the enmarbled emperor dates from well before 1453. The *Oracles of Leo* are probably the earliest Byzantine source to refer to this myth[15].

The *Tale of the True Emperor*, too, seems to indicate that the last emperor is petrified, for it states that he "lives inside the Tetrapylon, towards the coldest part of the Sigma and at the southern seaside" (lines 76-77), prior to the moment of his being discovered by the people and his being anointed by God above.

The Sigma was a semicircular portico on the triumphal way that led from the Theodosian Golden Gate to the city walls of Constantine[16]. The Tetrapylon is mentioned in the *Patria* (Preger, *Scriptores*, p. 181), where we read that emperor Zeno built it and that once (when?) it was used as a place where the imperial family bewailed the dead emperor, when his corpse was brought to the church of the Holy Apostles (which, looking at a map of Constantinople, makes no sense)[17]; but despite all this nonsense, it is worth noting that there appears to be a connection between the Tetrapylon and a dead emperor, because the *Tale* explicitly states that people thought of the last emperor as a dead man, although he was living in the Tetrapylon. The *Tale of the True Emperor* contains many topographical details that are difficult to locate. "A female charioteer stands

[12] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 153-155. For the Greek text of Ps. Methodios, see the recent edition by W.J. Aerts and G.A.A. Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*. Louvain 1998.

[13] See Bees, Μαρμαρωμένος Βασιλιάς, pp. 244γ-244λ'.

[14] See P. Alexander, 'Byzantium and the Migration of Literary Works and Motifs: the Legend of the Last Roman Emperor', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 2 (1971), pp. 47-68 (repr. in: idem, *Religious and Historical Thought in the Byzantine Empire*. London 1978, no. XII).

[15] The myth was already in the making at the time of the composition of the *Patria*, where we often read stories about emperors who, prior to their elevation to the throne, lived in one of Constantinople's monuments, which served as landmarks charting the eschatological topography of the city. See G. Dagron, *Constantinople imaginaire. Études sur le recueil des «Patria»*. Paris 1984, pp. 318-330, esp. p. 322.

[16] See Mango, Triumphal Way, pp. 173-188, esp. p. 180.

[17] See A. Berger, *Untersuchungen zu den Patria Konstantinupoleos*. Bonn 1988, pp. 358-359 (see also p. 353), and Mango, Triumphal Way, p. 175 and n. 19.

before his tabernacle and holds a crown, loudly acclaiming the fortune of the chosen emperor" (lines 83-84) – probably the Nike holding a crown, placed on top of the Golden Gate (Preger, *Scriptores*, p. 183), but in the *Tale* there appears to be some confusion with the statue of the female charioteer in the Hippodrome (Preger, *Scriptores*, p. 196). In lines 85-90 we read that there is a shrine of Christ in front of the Tetrapylon, with reliefs on the outside depicting the military feats of the last emperor; perhaps this is a reference to the sculptural decoration of the Golden Gate, which, according to the *Patria* (Preger, *Scriptores*, p. 183), "conveyed much knowledge (of the future) to those skilled (in interpreting such matters)"[18]. Lines 91-95 refer to a torrential flood, at the left side of the last emperor's abode, which poured out into the sea at the southern sea-walls – possibly indicating the Lykos river, but probably referring to the myth that the Xylokerkos gate was built to stop the water from flooding in (Preger, *Scriptores*, p. 259). In lines 79-80 we read that when the emperor will "come out of the Golden Gate and the Xylokerkos Gate", there will be an end to all wrongs. This appears to indicate that he is living near the Theodosian walls, in the south-western part of the city, as also indicated by the fact that "he will be revealed (...) in the days of the south-westerly wind (Lips)" (lines 6-7)[19]. "On the right there is a wide, paved road with polished, square stones" (lines 81-83): this is probably the triumphal way leading from the Golden Gate to the centre of the city. Taken in conjunction, all these topographical details make little sense, but there can be hardly any doubt that the last emperor lives either in the Golden Gate itself or somewhere close to this landmark[20]. The problem is that the author of the *Tale* made use of several earlier sources, which described the topography of the region stretching from the Golden Gate to the walls of Constantine in various, sometimes contradictory terms. The Tetrapylon may have been the Golden Gate of Theodosios (as we are inclined to think), the Golden Gate of Constantine (as Mango assumes)[21], or some monument lying in between those two golden gates. In the *Oracles of Leo* (XIII, 8) we read that the angel tells the Byzantine people to look for the last emperor in the western part of the city: that is, in the same region where the *Tale* locates the whereabouts of the last emperor.

In fact, there are many striking similarities between the *Oracles of Leo* and the *Tale of the True Emperor*, but as Alexander already argued, none of these similarities justify

[18] See Mango, Triumphal Way, pp. 183-186.

[19] For the eschatological connotations of Lips, see Theophanes Continuatus, p. 371, 12-18, and Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 132, n. 12.

[20] It can hardly be a coincidence that the *Life of Basil* (Theophanes Continuatus, p. 223, 5 – p. 224, 20) states that Basil I, the poor peasant who was to become emperor, entered the city through the Golden Gate, fell asleep in the porch of the nearby monastery of St. Diomedes, and was revealed as the emperor elect during that night by God above. Nor is it purely coincidental that this part of the city is called Jerusalem.

[21] See above, footnote 16.

the hypothesis that one of these two texts imitates the other[22]. Both texts go back to a centuries-old Byzantine tradition. The common source from which they derive their information concerning the last emperor has apparently been lost. However, it is reasonable to assume that this source presented the events of the last days more or less in the same manner as Pseudo-Methodios, but added the folkloristic detail that the last emperor would be enmarbled or at least would live inside a cave or a monument.

The main difference between the two texts is that the *Oracles of Leo* clearly state that the last emperor, however pious he may be, will not reign for ever, but will be removed from office at the end of all time, whereas the *Tale of the True Emperor* does not envisage such a sad end for the last emperor. In the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition the reign of the last and true emperor is inevitably followed by that of the Antichrist, who will rule in his stead. While the *Oracles of Leo* obviously hint at the reign of Antichrist by suggesting that the last emperor will fall victim to the powers of evil envy, the *Tale of the True Emperor* ends with a cheerful description of his glorious and pious reign. The latter text stops right at the moment the Antichrist usually makes his appearance – it describes the worldly state of affairs at the end of time, but not its cosmic aftermath, the struggle between good and evil. This does not mean that the source used by the anonymous writer of the *Tale* had nothing to tell about the reign of Antichrist. It simply means that the author (or perhaps the scribe of the manuscript[23]) was not particularly interested in the last stage of eschatological events, but instead focussed on the second last stage of things to come, the reign of the true emperor. Since the anonymous author explicitly writes that the last emperor will reign "at the end of (the dominion of) the Ismaelites" (line 6), his treatise should be regarded as the prophecy of someone living in territories occupied by the Ottomans. In other words, the author is not interested in eschatology as such, but rather in its political implications, being the renaissance of Byzantium and the establishment of a truly orthodox empire.

Although 'wish-prophecies' cannot be dated accurately, they may provide some clues as to their date of composition. Taking into account the fact that all manuscripts of the *Tale of the True Emperor* date from the post-Byzantine period, we would say that the prophecy of the regeneration of the Byzantine empire makes more sense after 1453 than before this ominous year. As for the last five texts of the *Oracles of Leo*, it is worth noting that oracle 12 states that the City of seven hills (Constantinople) will regain its authority once the last emperor will be installed: καὶ πάλιν ἔξεις, ἑπτάλοφε, τὸ κράτος (XIII, 13). This seems to indicate that this oracle was written when there was not a Byzantine emperor residing on the imperial throne in Constantinople. And if this supposition is correct, the only possible date would be 1204-1261, given the fact that the oracles date from before the second half of the thirteenth century (the date of the earliest Latin translation).

[22] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 131-133.

[23] The text ends rather abruptly in the Amsterdam manuscript. It would be interesting to know how the *Tale* ends in the other manuscripts.

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Since oracles 9 and 10 (X and XI) are in prose, many scholars assume that they are an interpolation[24]. The term 'interpolation' obviously implies that the other oracles belong together and form a single unitary composition. But is this really the case? It is fairly easy to recognize two independent groups of oracles, namely nos. 11-15 (treated above) and nos. 1-6 (which shall be discussed below). Between these two series of oracles there are four prophetic texts (nos. 7-10). The last two texts differ from the rest because they are not in verse. The first two texts, nos. 7-8 (VIII-IX), are in verse, but differ strongly from the other oracles[25]. Oracle 8 is the only text written in the past tense – which is of course rather unusual for a prophetic text. Oracle 7 is composed in poetic diction and highbrow style – in sharp contrast to the other oracles, which may be difficult to interpret, but which make use of common language and exhibit a plain, unadorned style. The author of oracle 7 did not rely entirely on his own poetic skills, but borrowed several phrases from Lycophron[26]. Of course, Lycophron's bizarre poem, *Alexandra*, is the right place to search for dignified expressions when one composes a prophetic text in the grand style. But it is worth noting that Lycophron became a popular author in the Byzantine school curriculum only in the twelfth century, when John Tzetzes composed a learned commentary on the poem and when the anonymous author of the *Christus Patiens* plagiarized Lycophron in his biblical play.

As oracle 7 is the only oracle in which we find obvious literary reminiscences, it is beyond doubt that its author did not write the other texts attributed to Leo the Wise. As oracle 8 is remarkable for its use of the past tense, it will have been written by yet another author. And as oracles 9 and 10 are in prose, it is highly likely that they were composed by a third author. But if it is true that all texts in the middle part of the *Oracles of Leo* were composed by different authors, there is no longer any reason to believe that this collection of oracles constitutes a self-contained unity. And where there is no unity, there can be no 'interpolations'. Instead of thinking in terms of integrated unity and disintegrating interpolations, we should question the notion that the collection that goes under the name of Leo VI was composed by just one single author and at just one specific moment in time. In fact, it is a *compilation*. It is a compilation of oracles,

[24] See Mango, Legend, p. 60; Komines, Παρατηρήσεις, p. 399; Vereecken, *Oracles*, p. 41.

[25] See Vereecken, *Oracles*, pp. 40-41.

[26] *Alexandra*, v. 304 οἰκτρὸν γάρ, οἰκτρὸν κεῖν' ἐπόψομαι φάος (cf. VIII, v. 2); v. 415 νήριθμος ἐσμός (cf. VIII, v. 6); vv. 81-82 λοισθίαν / (...) μοῖραν προὐμμάτων δεδορκότες (cf. VIII, v. 10); and v. 154 ἄσαρκα μιστύλασα (cf. VIII, v. 14).

which some anonymous scholar culled from various sources. Since the ninth oracle (no. X) explicitly refers to the fall of the city in 1204 and since none of the oracles appear to refer to the recapture of the city in 1261, the anonymous compilator must have been active during the years of the Nicene exile.

Oracle 7 (VIII) says that the city will witness a terrible civil war when the letter Kappa will have ruled for a long time. The letter Kappa stands for the Komnenoi, and the civil war is the long period of internal strive and bloodshed, which took place between the death of Manuel I, the last great ruler of the Comnenian dynasty, and the capture of the city by the crusaders in 1204. The "five choicest of the empire" will do terrible things. These are the five emperors who reigned between 1180 and 1204. Oracle 8 (IX) alludes to an old emperor, a fox-like hypocrite, who won the throne after having gone twice (as an exile?) to the "islands of the seven tables" (?). This emperor assumed power during the period of the civil wars when no one expected him to succeed in grasping the throne for himself. The only two old emperors in this period are Andronikos I Komnenos (1183-85) and Isaac II Angelos, during his second reign (1203-04). Oracle 9 (X) states that the city will fall when the twentieth number (= the numeral value of the letter Kappa) will be acclaimed along its walls. The fall of the city will bring about the coming of Antichrist, the emperor "with the sickle-shaped fingers", whose reign will be an abomination to God. The Antichrist is Baldwin of Flanders, the first Latin ruler of Constantinople. The letter Kappa once again stands for the Komnenoi, but in this case it indicates the Angeloi who were closely related to the Komnenoi. Oracle 10 (XI) prophesies that the reign of Emperor Isaac (= Isaac II Angelos, 1203-04) will bring about a temporary cessation of bloodshed, and that the patriarch, John (= John X Kamateros, 1198-1206), will loose his dignity as a willing accomplice to murder. It ends by stating that the last and true emperor, the anointed one, will be revealed in these ominous times. This may be an oblique reference to Theodore I Laskaris at Nicaea (1205-1221) or one of the rival emperors in Epirus or Trebizond.

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The *History* of Niketas Choniates is an invaluable source of information for the text and the interpretation of the first series of oracles, nos. 1-6. Choniates quotes the text of oracle 5 in full, and quotes a few verses from other oracles[27]. He alludes to oracle 4 in a passage about the superstitious beliefs of Isaac II, who used to say that a reign of nine years had been originally allotted to Andronikos, but that the latter's misdeeds had reduced this span to three years, the remainder having accrued to himself[28]. Choniates also describes an image of Andronikos in the church of the Forty Martyrs, which represented the emperor as a peasant, clad in black and holding a scythe, the curve of which enclosed the bust of a youth; he states that Andronikos thus wished to let the world know that he had killed young Alexios Komnenos, his predecessor on the throne[29]. This singular portrait is similar to the original pictorial composition of oracle 4, which is divided into two in the manuscript tradition, but actually forms just one text (VII and VI). Since oracle 4 is divided into two texts in the manuscripts that have come down to us, the pictorial composition is also divided into two, showing first a juvenile head and then an emperor bearing a scythe in his right hand. There can be little doubt, however, that when oracle 4 had not yet been divided into two, the accompanying image must have showed a scythe-bearing emperor and the head of a young man. And this image, in its turn, must have closely resembled the portrait of Andronikos as described by Choniates.

[27] For the text of oracle 5 (no. IV in our edition), see Niketas Choniates, p. 355, 9-15. For the fragments, see Niketas Choniates, pp. 41, 12-13 (= no. I.2, v. 11), 41, 10-11 (= no. III, v. 7), 222, 68 (= no. III, v. 6), and 351, 72 (= no. VI, v. 6).

Choniates' information on the portrait of emperor Andronikos is very useful, because it proves that we are justified in relying on the numbering of the oracles that we find in the texts themselves. In the second oracle (I.2), we read: "The second (symbol) is a child, another beast". In the third oracle (II and III), we read that "the third (symbol) is double", as it consists of a diptych which deals with an eagle holding a cross (no. II) and a unicorn (no. III). In the first part of the fourth oracle (VII), we read that "this is the fourth (symbol) running from the bear": this is the scythe-bearing emperor, who is about to reap the head of a young man. And in the fifth oracle (IV), we read: "The cow is the fifth (in line) and the end of the bear-feeder". The next oracle, no. 6 (V), states: "(This is) another bear, a second cub-feeder". In this last oracle, the numbering starts anew, but as it obviously refers to the cub-feeding bear of oracle 1, there is a connection with oracles 1-5. In none of the other oracles attributed to Leo the Wise do we find any kind of numbering, which indicates by itself that oracles 1-6 form a prophetic entity in its own right.

Niketas Choniates only quotes from, or refers to, oracles from series 1-6 – which is hardly surprising since oracles 7-10, which deal with the catastrophe of 1204, must have been too modern for his taste, and since oracles 11-15, which deal with the last emperor, may have been written when he was already dead and buried. It is worth noting that Choniates never omits to state that the oracle he quotes, is either very old (παλαίτατον or παλαίφατον) or has been circulating from mouth to mouth for a long time. As Mango rightly surmises, this implies that the oracles quoted by Niketas Choniates do not date from the Comnenian age, but were considerably older[30]. It is also worth noting

[28] Niketas Choniates, p. 433, 89-92, cf. text no. VI, 9-10. See Mango, Legend, p. 64.
[29] Niketas Choniates, p. 332, 22-34. See Mango, Legend, p. 64.
[30] See Mango, Legend, pp. 62-65.

that Choniates quotes the text of an oracle "transmitted orally and in manuscript", which does not belong to the *Oracles of Leo*[31]. This obviously implies that Niketas Choniates was familiar with more oracles than the ones that go under the name of Leo the Wise. Interesting is also the fact that Choniates, whenever he discusses these 'old' oracles, does not attribute these texts to Leo VI, but rather presents them as if they were the products of ancient and anonymous authors. It cannot be ruled out that oracles 1-6 were already known as the divinely inspired work of Leo VI in the twelfth century, but the fact that Choniates is apparently not aware of his authorship, strongly suggests that oracles 1-6 circulated before 1204 without any explicit ascription to Leo the Wise[32].

Oracles 1-6 deal with a series of rulers, characterized as either bad or good. As they contain references to historical events, they are not real prophecies, but so-called *vaticinia ex eventu*. There are two interesting parallels to this series of imperial prophecies after the event. In his account of his embassy to Constantinople in 968, Liutprand of Cremona discusses a prophetic book, entitled the *Vision of Daniel*, which circulated among the Byzantines and the Arabs, and which predicted a succession of capable and less capable emperors, and their successes or failures in dealing with the enemy. It predicted that "at the time of this Nikephoros (Phokas) the Assyrians (= the Arabs) would be unable to resist the Greeks", and that "he would live no longer than seven years". After his death, however, "an emperor much worse and much less warlike than he would arise, during whose reign the Assyrians would prevail and occupy all the lands as far as Chalcedon"[33]. We can be certain that the prophetic book Liutprand describes did not mention Nikephoros Phokas by name, but referred to his reign in terms so clear that all its readers immediately recognized who the just emperor was. We do not know what the book had to tell about Nikephoros' predecessors on the throne, but it is reasonable to assume that they were characterized as less capable and morally more suspect than Nikephoros Phokas, the last just ruler, during whose reign the Byzantine empire would reach its apogee. But as good things never last, the just ruler would reign only shortly (seven years is not very long) and would be succeeded by a bad emperor. In the *Oracles of Leo* we find the same sequence of events. The first four oracles describe the reigns of four emperors who are either wicked or blatantly incompetent. The fifth oracle deals with the just emperor and how the empire will prosper because of his just rulership, but it predicts that he will not reign for long. The sixth and last oracle warns the Byzantines that the just ruler will be succeeded by a weak emperor who is the Antichrist.

[31] Niketas Choniates, p. 353, 37 - p. 354, 44.

[32] For the myth of Leo the Wise, see Mango, Legend, passim.

[33] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 96-98, and W. Brandes, 'Liudprand von Cremona (Legatio Cap. 39-41) und eine bisher unbeachtete west-östliche Korrespondenz über die Bedeutung des Jahres 1000 A.D.', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93 (2000), pp. 435-463, esp. at pp. 439-446.

The second text describing a historical sequence of bad and good emperors is also entitled *Vision of Daniel*. The text has come down to us in a Slavonic translation. It was composed in Sicily between 827 and 829[34]. In chapters 2 and 3 of this text, an angel instructs the prophet Daniel about the future of mankind. While the third chapter alludes to significant events that are yet to happen, the second chapter clearly refers to political events that have already taken place. First there are the four "scepters" of the Isaurian dynasty: Leo III and Constantine V, Artabasdos, Leo IV, and Irene and Constantine VI. Then there are the six "horns": Empress Irene (her sole reign after the blinding of her son), Nikephoros I, Staurakios, Michael I, Leo V, and Michael II and his son Theophilos. All these emperors are described in unmistakable terms: Irene blinded and killed her son; Nikephoros descended from an Arab family and fought strenuously against the Bulgarians, first defeating them and then defeated himself; Staurakios was his son and only ruled for a short period; Michael I bore an angelic name; Leo V ruled for seven years; and Michael II and Theophilos uttered blasphemy against the Highest (an obvious reference to their iconoclastic beliefs). Since the text prophesies that Michael II will be executed like a common criminal (whereas, in fact, he died from a kidney disease), it is obvious that the text was written when he was still alive. Although the anonymous author fulminates against the iconoclasts in the passage about the Isaurian dynasty as well as in his vitriolic outburst against Michael II, he vituperates Irene for killing her son and even calls her the "one-breasted woman of Babylon", and he omits to criticize Leo V for re-introducing iconoclasm. This strongly suggests that, in the passage about the six horns, the iconophile author made use of an iconoclastic source, which heaped scorn on Irene as the whore of Babylon and presented Leo V in a more favourable light.

The early ninth century was a period rife with ominous prophecies[35]. Apart from the Slavonic *Vision of Daniel*, we know that the following apocalyptic texts were published in this period: three iconophile pamphlets predicting the deaths of Leo V, Michael II and Theophilos, for the composition of which Methodios (the future patriarch) was convicted in 831[36]; a poem attributed to the prophet Bryson and 'predicting' the political upheaval

[34] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 62-72.

[35] For a survey of prophetic and eschatological texts written in early medieval Byzantium, see W. Brandes, 'Die apokalyptische Literatur', in: *Quellen zur Geschichte des frühen Byzanz (4. - 9. Jahrhundert). Bestand und Probleme*, eds. F. Winkelmann & W. Brandes. Berlin 1990, pp. 305-322 and 367-370. See also W. Brandes, 'Endzeitvorstellungen und Lebenstrost in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit (7. - 9. Jahrhundert)', in: *Varia III (Ποικίλα Βυζαντινά 11)*, eds. W. Brandes et alii. Bonn 1991, pp. 9-62.

[36] See J. Gouillard, 'Une œuvre inédite du patriarche Méthode: La vie d' Euthyme de Sardes', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 53 (1960), pp. 39-41 and 43-45. Treadgold, *Byzantine Revival*, pp. 276-277, suggests that the second pamphlet, the one predicting the death of Michael II, is the original of the Slavonic *Vision of Daniel*.

in Sicily in the late 820s[37]; the *Apocalypse of Leo of Constantinople*, which apparently dates from the early ninth century[38]; and an illustrated oracle book that supposedly circulated during the reign of Leo V and 'predicted' his death on Christmas[39]. As we will show, the first six *Oracles of Leo* should be added to this list of early ninth-century prophetic texts.

The second oracle predicts that the emperor will be blinded by ravens[40]. The fourth oracle predicts that the first letter of the scythe-bearing emperor is a Mu and that the third letter of his name is a Chi: that is to say, his name is M(i)ch(ael)[41]. In the thousand-year history of Byzantium, there is only one period in which these two predictions combined make sense, namely the late eighth and the early ninth century. For only then do we have an emperor who was blinded, and an emperor, second next in line, who was called Michael: Constantine VI and Michael I Rangabe. Once we understand that the first six oracles refer to a sequence of emperors around the year 800, the interpretation of these seemingly obscure texts becomes quite easy. It must be said, however, that there are a number of details, especially the cabbalistic value of proper names, that we cannot explain. But in general, the texts contain so many easily recognizable details that it is hard to understand why no one else was able to recognize them. It is one of the many Byzantine mysteries. The reason is probably that previous scholars were under the impression that all the texts of the *Oracles of Leo* were composed by just one author, either Leo the Wise or some anonymous ghostwriter. But, as we explained above, the *Oracles of Leo* are in fact a compilation, of the first half of the thirteenth century, which goes back to several earlier sources, one of which is the series 1-6. And of course, we should not confuse the date of the compilation with the date of its separate parts. In fact, the series of the oracles 1-6 refers to the following sequence of emperors: Irene, Constantine VI, Nikephoros I and Staurakios, Michael I, Leo V, and Antichrist.

Let us read backwards, from the coming of Antichrist to the evolving of history as we know it. In the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition, the reign of the last true emperor is inevitably followed by the reign of Antichrist. As the Antichrist is a wicked, but weak

[37] Ed. A. Pertusi, *Fine di Bisanzio e fine del mondo*. Rome 1988, pp. 162-166.

[38] Ed. R. Maisano, *L' Apocalisse apocrifa di Leone di Constantinopoli*. Naples 1975; for the date of the text, see the introduction, pp. 33-41.

[39] Theophanes Continuatus, p. 35, 20 - p. 36, 7.

[40] See I.2, v. 22 and v. 29.

[41] See VII, 7-8 στοιχεῖον αὐτὸ πρῶτον (...) τὸ μῦ τὸ στοιχεῖον τοῦτο βλέπε, and 5-6 τὸ τρίτον στοιχεῖον ἡ χείρ, καὶ δρέπανον αὐτόγε. The word χείρ obviously refers to the letter χῖ. The fact that the third letter stands for death (the scythe), alludes to the allegoric value of the letter χῖ as a symbol of the cross (cf. χίασμα and χιασμός) and, of course, the cross symbolizes death. In VI, 4 we read that "the third letter when duplicated is the first letter": if you join together two chi's, you can clearly distinguish a mu in the lower half of this combination of letters.

emperor, his reign leads to the division of the empire into ten scepters[42]. In oracle 6 (no. V), vv. 6-7, we read that "crowns (στέφη) encircling the sun at both sides bring about a division of the whole state". As God takes mercy on fallen mankind, he arranges that time will be shortened and will not run its normal course as dictated by the rules of nature, lest men suffer for too long[43]. In v. 4, we read that "the natural movement of time is aborted". We furthermore read that all this "is to take place at the end of all time" (v. 5). The sixth oracle, then, obviously refers to the reign of Antichrist.

The fifth oracle (no. IV) refers to the reign of the last true emperor, as also indicated by the cynical remarks of Niketas Choniates, who makes fun of Isaac II Angelos' pretensions that he was supposedly the "bovine emperor" who would reign at the end of all time[44]. What Choniates found so hilarious was that an emperor as incompetent as Isaac could think that he of all people could pretend to be the last emperor. But that is of course mere hindsight. As Isaac did not know what Choniates knew at the time of writing, namely that the city would fall and the Byzantine empire would collapse, it is a bit unfair to criticize him for identifying himself with the last emperor. However, far more important than this futile question, is the fact that Isaac correctly interpreted the oracle about the bull-shaped figure as a prediction of the coming of the last and true emperor. The text itself makes abundantly clear that Isaac's interpretation is correct. In v. 9 it is stated that "you, O mightiest, left the realms of the dead". In the apocalyptic tradition of the Byzantines[45], we read time and again that the last emperor will be awakened as from death and that when he arises people will think he is dead although he is only asleep. In v. 10 we read that "you shall enjoy the power for a short while". All of the prophetic texts in Byzantium explicitly state that the last emperor, however pious and just, will reign for a short period only. Moreover, the virtues of the last emperor are underlined in vv. 5-6, "you possess the cardinal virtues more than others do, and chasten your loved ones by being moderate". And his truly imperial virtues are hinted at in v. 8: "as you alone are brought up from the glory of the palace". This is why he will "receive a most worthy end" (v. 7). In contrast to oracles 1-4, the fifth oracle does not contain any reference to well-known historical events. This is because it is not a prophecy after the event, but a 'wish-prophecy', which was composed during the reign of Leo V.

The fourth oracle consists of two texts (nos. VII and VI). This is the oracle prognosticating that the fourth emperor shall be called M(ι)χ(αήλ), Michael. As his name begins

[42] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 204 and n. 50. The idea that the reign of Antichrist will bring about the division of the empire into ten scepters, goes back to *Daniel* 7: 20-24 and *Revelation* 17: 12-16.

[43] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 209-210.

[44] Niketas Choniates, p. 355, 3-18 and p. 433, 89-9. On the figure of the bovine emperor in Byzantine prophecies, see P. Magdalino, 'Une prophétie inédite des environs de l'an 965 attribuée à Léon le Philosophe', *Travaux et Mémoires* 14 (2002), pp. 391-402.

[45] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 151-184.

with τὸ μῆ (=τὸ μῦ), it indicates that the reign of the fourth emperor will be characterized by τομή, "cutting": he will "assume power in order to *cut* young verdure" (ὡς *τέμνειν* τὴν χλόην). This is why the emperor bears a scythe. As we explained above, the original pictorial composition of the fourth oracle showed a scythe-bearing emperor and the head of a young man. The oracle symbolically refers to this young man by stating that the emperor will "cut young verdure" (VII, 9) and will "cut off a rose" (VII, 4). In Byzantine epitaphs to young men, we usually read that the deceased was harvested before his time by scythe-bearing Death, who reaped him like a rose or cut him like the green grass. In VII, vv. 9-10, it is said that "having assumed power in order to cut young verdure, he (the scythe-bearing emperor) will not spare you, who remain true to (imperial) authority". This indicates that the young man, whom the scythe-bearer will cut to pieces, is an emperor himself, an emperor more loyal to the ideals of just rulership and more worthy to reign than the usurper who takes his place. Since the scythe-bearing emperor is Michael I, it goes without saying that the young man must be his predecessor, Staurakios, who reigned for a couple of months. Staurakios had been severely wounded in combat, fighting at the side of his father Nikephoros, and died six months later, of a gruesome putrefaction in his wound. Although his death was probably inevitable, a rumour circulated that Staurakios was being poisoned by his sister Prokopia, who was married to Michael I. Taking into consideration the fact that Staurakios planned to have his brother-in-law removed, it is reasonable to assume that Staurakios himself was under the impression that he was the victim of an attempt on his life[46]. As the anonymous author of the oracle states that the young man (Staurakios) was put to death by the scythe-bearer (Michael I), he appears to share Staurakios' suspicions and to lend credence to the rumour that there was some sinister assassination plot. In VI, v. 5, we read: "The things that were once united have separated". Our oracular author means to say by this that the family ties between Staurakios and Michael I had been severed by the assassination plot and the subsequent murder. In vv. 6-7, we read that only four months would pass until the scythe-bearer would kill "the choicest by the sword". In fact, the exact number is three months and nine days, for Michael I assumed power on October 2, 811, and Staurakios died on January 11, 812. As for vv. 9-10, "having lived three times three life-cycles, old man, go to Hades, leaving two in the middle", Niketas Choniates' interpretation of these obscure verses (see above) leave no doubt that he thought it meant that a reign of nine years had been allotted to the scythe-bearer, but that his misdeeds had reduced this span to two years, the remainder having been accrued to the last true emperor (Leo V). Michael I indeed ruled only for two years. What Michael I's misdeeds are, is stated in v. 8: "for a short while you will erect temples for idols". Michael I is known for his support to the iconophile faction and for

[46] See Treadgold, *Byzantine Revival*, pp. 174-177 and 412, n. 239.

his munificence to religious institutions, monasteries and churches. Seeing that our oracular source clearly presents Michael's idolatry as the main reason why God was angry with him and allowed him to reign only "for a short while", it is beyond doubt that its author was an iconoclast.

The third oracle is a diptych, consisting of texts II and III. It deals with a cross-bearing eagle and a horn-bearing horse (σταυροῦχος ὄρνις and ἵππος κερασφόρος). These two symbols stand for the co-reign of Nikephoros I and his son Staurakios. Staurakios is obviously the *σταυροῦχος* ὄρνις, and Nikephoros the ἵππος *κερασφόρος* (the horn, κέρας, is a well-known symbol of victory, νίκη). In II, v. 5 we read that the first letter of the name of Staurakios is the same as its last: namely, sigma[47]. In v. 11, where we read that he ascended to power from the south, there is an oblique reference to the fact that the family of Nikephoros and Staurakios descended from the Arab dynasty of the Ghassanids[48]. And in vv. 12-13, it is stated that he will come to an end on a horse with a horn, when the morning star will be high in the sky. The battle against the Bulgarians, in which Nikephoros died and Staurakios was so severely wounded that he was forced to abdicate, took place in the early hours, before and after dawn, of July 25, 811. In v. 4 it is said that the emperor was passionate, bold and lascivious. Staurakios was certainly passionate and bold, but none of our sources inform us that he was particularly lascivious unless the author of the oracle believed that it was not the father, but the son who raped two girls on the occasion of his wedding[49]. In v. 10, however, we read that Staurakios was "the mightiest of the birds" (the eagle, the symbol of the Byzantine empire) and "the only emperor"; and in v. 9 we read that he "will reign in the sign of the cross" (which is once again an obvious reference to his name). In the light of oracle 4, where Michael I is openly criticized for killing Staurakios and usurping power, this is of course an explicit compliment to Staurakios and his imperial qualities, and an implicit condemnation of Michael, the usurper. In the second part of the diptych, which deals with Nikephoros (no. III), we read that he was "a descendant of Byza" (v. 3): although his family was of Arab origin, they had been living in Constantinople for ages and Nikephoros himself was a trusted administrator of the empire, working in a Constantinopolitan environment. It is also said that he was "ready for combat" (v. 3), which is certainly true of Nikephoros who was always fighting somewhere in the few years that he swayed the scepter over the Byzantine empire. Nikephoros is criticized for "closing his ears" to good advice and for "whinnying (like a horse) without the reins of friend-

[47] The verse reads: "having the unit (=letter) as his beginning and his end". The Komnenoi assumed that this prophecy predicted the reign of their dynasty, because the first letters of their respective names formed the word AIMA, which begins and ends with the same letter, alpha. See Mango, Legend, p. 63.

[48] See Alexander, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 66, n. 21.

[49] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, p. 483.

ship" (vv. 4-5): that is to say, he acted on his own, without listening to his friends. The oracle predicts that the last part (syllable) of his name will prevail over him (v. 6)[50]: -ρος, which stands for Ῥῶς. The Rhos are the foul tribes of Gog and Magog (cf. *Ezek.* 38,2 and 39,1) that will cause havoc at the end of all time; but it cannot be ruled that the Rus' are meant, the Viking warriors of southern Russia. When the Bulgarians were utterly defeated by the Byzantine army in early 811, their khan appealed to other tribes and nations for help, and with the assistance of these mercenaries he succeeded in annihilating the troops of Nikephoros. Were the belligerent Rus' perhaps one of the khan's allies participating in the battle that would lead to the death of Nikephoros? The oracle furthermore predicts that Nikephoros "will unexpectedly fall in a wet place" (v. 7). As we know from historical sources, the Byzantine army had been entrapped in a narrow valley in the mountains, through which a river flowed. When the Bulgarians and their allies attacked, Nikephoros and his army tried to escape and fled to the marshy riversides, where they tumbled in on top of each other, drowning, suffocating, and being trampled under foot, while those surviving were butchered by the enemy. And it is here, in this wet place, that emperor Nikephoros died among his soldiers. In the next line (v. 8), we read that "the beginning and the end (of Nikephoros) is a horn". The beginning is his dominion, his military prowess and his victories (his κέρας). The end is his sad death at the hands of the Bulgarian khan, Krum, who turned his skull into a drinking-horn (a κέρας), which he used to drink the health of his allies[51].

As stated above, the second oracle (no. I.2) deals with Constantine VI. It begins as follows: "The second (symbol) is a child [that is, of the she-bear, Irene], another beast [that is, a flying snake[52]]". In the next three verses it is said that "the serpent, flying to the south, immersed in black, and entirely black himself, (will be) horribly deprived of the light (in his eyes) by ravens" (vv. 20-22). This is of course an obvious reference to the blinding, and subsequent death, of Constantine VI. He is totally black, not only because he has lost his eyesight, but also because, as Theophanes informs us, "the sun was darkened for seventeen days and did not emit its rays" after his blinding[53]. He is metaphorically said to be "flying to the south", because when he realized that his life was in danger, he embarked on his imperial galley and sailed across the Sea of Marmora to Pylae, intending to seek refuge in the Anatolic theme: that is, taking Constantinople

[50] Cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 222, 66-70, who interpreted this verse as a prediction of the number of years that Manuel would reign, namely 38 years, the last syllable of his name being ηλ.

[51] For all the historical information in the above, see Treadgold, *Byzantine Revival*, pp. 127-174.

[52] For the flying snake as a symbol of evil, see the passage in the *Chronicle* of George the Monk (ed. de Boor, p. 750, 15-18) in which he inveighs against Constantine V and calls him an ὄφις πετόμενος.

[53] Theophanes, *Chronicle*, p. 649.

as the starting-point of his itinerary, he was clearly heading for the south. The ravens are the disloyal and dishonest courtiers, Staurakios, Aëtios, and other confidants of Irene, who were involved in the conspiracy against Constantine VI. The raven is not only notorious for its greed, disloyalty and impiety[54], but is also known as a flatterer, a fawning courtier[55]. It also symbolizes death, of course. In the next verses we read that the snake descended from an evil family coming from the East (v. 23): the Isaurians. Constantine VI, the snake, will "throw himself and the city into disarray" (v. 24) – which is, perhaps, a reference to his adulterous bigamy which led to considerable controversy, or to his notoriously bad relations with his mother which led to much unrest at court and in the military. "And spring (will convey) your lamentations to the summer" (v. 25). In the spring of 797, Constantine's son, the offspring of his adulterous wedlock, died at the tender age of seven months, and the emperor "wept bitterly over him", as Theophanes tells us. The death of Constantine's 'bastard' son, the heir to the throne, was a shock to his father and a sign to others that things were going awry and that the future looked bleak for Constantine. Indeed, as it turned out, emperor Constantine VI was ousted from power only a few months after this ominous portent, during the summer. The next three lines (vv. 26-28) are difficult to interpret. The (numeral?) figures of the letters predict when "your end [death] will (be shown to) be inferior to that of your father": this is the sort of higher Kabbala we are not trained in. "You alone are the wretched serpent, the destroyer of the bear". Of course, Constantine VI did not kill the she-bear, Irene, but instead fell victim to her wicked and devious plots. Is this perhaps an oblique reference to the rumours that Irene had poisoned her husband Leo IV, who if she is the female bear, would be the male bear? Does it perhaps suggest that Constantine VI, being the son of evil Irene, was jointly responsible for the death of his father? Or does it mean that the author of the oracles believed Constantine VI was still alive at the time of the overthrow of Irene[56] and assumed that he had had a hand in it? We do not know. In the last verse (v. 29), we read once again that he "will fall prey to the horrible ravens": the courtiers conniving with Irene.

The first oracle (no. I.1) deals with Irene and refers to the periods she was in control, first co-reigning with Constantine VI (780-790 and 792-797) and then reigning on her own (797-802). It is beyond doubt that Irene is the subject of the first oracle, for here we have a *she*-bear that is a *he*. In the Latin branch of the manuscripts, which preserves the

[54] See *The Correspondence of Ignatios the Deacon*, ed. C. Mango, Dumbarton Oaks 1997, pp. 204-205, and *Ὁ Πουλολόγος*, ed. I. Τσαβαρή, Athens 1987, pp. 163-167.

[55] In numerous Byzantine texts we read that κόλακες are κόρακες. The pun goes back to Aristophanes, *Vespae*, v. 45.

[56] For some dubious evidence that Constantine VI did not die immediately after being blinded, but lived on into the early ninth century, see Theophanes, *Chronicle*, pp. 649-650, n. 10.

full text of the first oracle (in contrast to the conservative branch, which omits the first two verses and the accompanying picture), we see a picture of a cub-feeding bear[57]. This picture is missing in the Amsterdam manuscript and other manuscripts belonging to the conservative branch, but there can be little doubt that this is the original picture. In oracle 6 (no. V, vv. 2-3), we read that "(this is) another bear, a second cub-feeder; they are alike in every way, but (the second) is a mere shadow (of the first)". And indeed, the picture of oracle 6 shows a cub-feeding bear. The text of oracle 1 itself (I.1, v. 3 and v. 7) leaves no doubt that the original picture must have depicted a she-bear with cubs: "you raise young dogs [= cubs]" and "you suckle (cubs)". It is worth noting, however, that this cub-feeding bear is constantly referred to in masculine forms: ἐκμιμούμενος, αὐτὸν ἐξάγων, ὁ (...) συγκεκραμένος, and ὅς[58]. It is a well-known fact that empress Irene, during the period of her sole reign, used the title 'emperor' rather than 'empress' in her official decrees and legislation. Since, during the long history of Byzantium, no other empress is known to have been so bold as to claim 'masculine' prerogatives, the male she-bear (to use an oxymoron) must be Irene. This male she-bear is criticized for its hypocrisy: she pretends to tend her cubs, but time will reveal her inner thoughts; she feeds her young dogs, but her son, the snake (Constantine VI), will destroy them; she suckles them, but the Lord will reveal her hypocrisy[59]. The cubs whom Irene supposedly takes care of, and whom Constantine VI, the snake, will take care of once and for all, are the five younger brothers of Leo IV, who revolted, or were thought to have revolted, on more occasions than one in the late eighth century[60]. Irene was suspicious of her young brothers-in-law and feared them. Upon ascending to power in 780, she had them exiled from the capital and had them tonsured and ordained as priests, which made them ineligible for imperial office. In 792, during the sole reign of Constantine VI, Nikephoros, the most dangerous of the brothers of Leo IV, was blinded and the others had their tongues cut off. But despite this severe mutilation inflicted on them, they were still viewed by people in favour of iconoclasm as the legitimate heirs to the throne. They revolted in 797 and, once again, in 799; on the latter occasion, the four brothers who had not yet lost their eyesight, were blinded by Irene. By referring to them as the young

[57] For the original text of oracle 1 and for the accompanying picture, see Vereecken, *Oracles*, p. 92 and fig. VI.

[58] See v. 2 of the original version (see footnote above), and I.1, vv. 9, 12 and 14.

[59] See the original version, vv. 1-11 (Vereecken, *Oracles*, p. 92). Cf. our edition, I.1, vv. 2-10. In v. 14 the author uses another zoological metaphor. There we read that "(you) have opened your mouth (in order to swallow) the winged creatures (εἰς ὑποπτέρους)". The ὑπόπτεροι are the sons of Constantine V, the brothers of Leo IV. What the author probably means to say, is that the sons are "under the wings" (ὑπὸ πτεροῖς) of the hen Irene.

[60] See Treadgold, *Byzantine Revival*, pp. 11 (conspiracy in 776), 60-61 (conspiracy in 780), 100-101 (conspiracy in 792), 112 (conspiracy in 797), 113-114 (conspiracy in 799), and 182 (conspiracy in 812).

cubs, whom Irene has to take care of, but does not (on the contrary, she tries to eliminate them), the author of the oracles suggests that she is an evil woman, full of false pretence, who only minds her own interests without any care for the fate of the empire. Small wonder that nothing good can come from this woman (see vv. 11-15). In the last verse we are told that "the words she pours out do not benefit the city" – this is probably a reference to the speeches Irene held in favour of the icons. In the first verses we read that Irene, that awful hypocrite, "hides within herself the error that causes enmity", but that "time will reveal her reasoning". Irene's error (πλάνη) is iconophily. In the first seven years of her reign Irene did not openly profess her personal beliefs, but waited for the right moment to restore the cult of the icons; she had to act so cautiously because there was still much support for the iconoclast cause, especially in the military. In the eyes of her opponents, this cautious stance must have been tantamount to sheer hypocrisy.

To summarize, the first series of oracles (nos. 1-6) is an iconoclastic treatise that was composed during the reign of Leo V, most probably shortly after the re-introduction of iconoclasm as the official imperial doctrine in 815. It comprises four *prophecies after the event*, which deal with Irene, Constantine VI, Nikephoros I and Staurakios, and Michael I, respectively. It also contains one genuine *wish-prophecy*, celebrating the glorious reign of the last emperor, Leo V. And it ends with a gloomy description of the reign of Antichrist.

Surprisingly enough, then, it turns out that there is after all a connection between the *Oracles of Leo* and an emperor bearing that name – only it is not Leo VI the Wise, but Leo V the Armenian. This connection, however, must certainly have sunk into oblivion by the time of Niketas Choniates, for there is no trace in his writings of any awareness that the six oracles were related to the famous religious controversy over the cult of the icons. Choniates simply treats these ancient oracles as accurate predictions of things that had happened or were destined to happen in his own age. The same can be said about the anonymous scholar who produced a collection of oracles in the first half of the thirteenth century and incorporated the series of iconoclastic oracles into his compilation. He, too, must have thought that these oracles dealt with the future of the empire, not with its past. It is difficult to establish when the iconoclastic oracles turned into mere predictions, which were interpreted almost at random and without any regard for their original topicality. But since iconoclasm became the universal bogey after 843, it is not very likely that they could have circulated after that date if people suspected that their contents were heretical. Their potentially subversive meaning will have escaped the notice of most people in the late ninth and tenth centuries, because the texts are elusive and difficult to interpret. In most Byzantine chronicles we find a story about an illuminated oracle book that circulated during the reign of Leo V and accurately predicted his death

on Christmas, 820 (see above). It is certainly possible that the iconophile source, from which the chronicles derived this information, was familiar with the illuminated oracle book that presented Leo V as the last true emperor, and simply rewrote history by pretending that this oracle book, far from presenting Leo V in a favourable light, actually predicted his death. But it cannot be ruled out that some iconophile author, living during the reign of Leo V or shortly after, responded to the iconoclastic oracles by producing an anti-iconoclastic oracle book in retaliation. Whatever the case, the original purpose of the iconoclastic oracles must have been lost on most people soon after their publication. The oracles had a bright future ahead of them and could count on lasting popularity, as they gradually turned into a-historical prophecies, which had supposedly been written by that most wise of emperors, Leo VI, who had much to say about the future, but nothing about the past.

III LANGUAGE[1]

Although one can clearly distinguish stylistic differences between the various oracles and divide them into different groups on account of their contents (see above, pp. 31-32), it is impossible to distinguish the oracles on a purely grammatical level. The *Oracles of Leo* are written in a typically Byzantine mixture of archaizing and more demotic linguistic elements, although it must be said that often the archaizing elements predominate. The same is true for the *Tale of the True Emperor*.

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Some of these clearly archaizing elements are:

– Intervocalic -ττ- instead of -σσ-: διττόν O II, 2 (next to δισσῶς O IX, 5 and δισσούμενον O VI, 4): τριτταῖς O XV, 7: ταραττομένων N 10; φυλάττων N 38; φυλάττειν N 101; πράττειν N 148.

– Temporal augment in the indicative of the past tenses: ὤφθης O IV, 4; ἥπλωσας O IX, 9; ἠκούομεν N 150. When the syllabic augment is unstressed, vowel deletion does not occur: ἐδίωξαν N 4; ἐδόκουν N 39; ἐφάνη N 108[2].

– Reduplication (syllabic and temporal): nearly all perfect forms, 46 in total[3], have reduplication; the only exception is ἀνάλωται, but the forms ἀνήλωμαι and ἀνάλωμαι already coexisted in the classical period (the reduplication is not visible in μεσηλιωμένον; we assume that ὀργιωμένη is a spelling mistake for ὠργιωμένοι).

– The perfect is primarily constructed with monolectic forms; the only two instances of periphrastic formation of the perfect are: ἔσται ἀφωμοιωμένος N 62 and ἐστὶν ἠλειμμένος N 105.

– The future tense is also monolectic[4]; the so-called attic future is still used: κερδανεῖ

[1] We refer to the *Oracles of Leo* with O and to the *Tale of the True Emperor* with N (Narratio).

[2] For the development of the augment, both temporal and syllabic, see Browning, *Medieval Greek*, pp. 57-58 and 64-65; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 207-208 and 248.

[3] Forms of κεῖμαι and οἶδα are not taken into consideration: γέγηθας O I, 7; συγκεκραμένος O I, 12; κέχηνας O I 14; ἁφῃρημένος O I, 22; πέφηνας O II, 8; κεκτημένας O III, 4; τέτευχας O IV, 7; συνηγμένα O VI, 5; ἀνάλωται O VI, 7; εἰργμένης O VIII, 6; ὠργιωμένοι O VIII, 10; κεχραμμένος O VIII, 13; εἴληφας O IX, 10; ἤγγικεν O X, 4; κατεστυγνασμένος O XII, 4; ἠνομημένον O XII, 6; λελησμένος O XIII, 2; κεκλωσμένος O XIII, 6; δεδοικώς O XV, 5; εἴληφας O XV, 6; τεθηπώς O XV, 10; τέτευχας O XVI, 2; ἔσχηκας O XVI 3; δεδώκασι N 4; ἠλειμμένος N 11; κεκρυμμένος N 18; ἐγκεχάρακται N 20; ἐπικεκυφυῖα N 29; κεκαρμένος N 30; ἐνδεδυμένος N 30; κεκρυμμένον N 36; ἠλειμμένος N 42; ἠλειμμένον N 49; ἡμφιεσμένον N 52; ἀφωμοιωμένος N 62; μεσηλιωμένον N 74; ἠνωμένον N 81; ἐστρωμένον N 89; ἐστενωμένη N 91; πεφυτευμένη N 95; πέφυκεν N 100; ἠλειμμένος N 105; ἐξεστηκότες N 111; ἐκτεταμένον N 121.

[4] The periphrastic construction ὁ μέλλων ἀποκαλυφθῆναι N 11 does not have the same meaning as ὁ ἀποκαλυφθησόμενος, and the same holds true for μέλλει πράττειν N 147.

O III, 6: κερδανεῖς O XVI, 4; προκρινεῖ (post correcturam) O XVI, 5; ἀποστελεῖ N 48.

– The endings of the imperfect indicative and the aorist indicative are still formed according to the rules of ancient grammar; the mixture of imperfect and aorist forms that we find in post-classical Greek[5], does not occur. Likewise, the second person of the aorist imperative does not end in -ε, but in -ον: εὐθύμησον O VII, 14; ὄδευσον O XII, 8; ἔμπλησον O XV, 14; ἐλέησον N 113.

– The athematic verbs in -μι have not yet been replaced by thematic verbs in -ω: one finds numerous examples of ἀφίημι, ἄπειμι (ἀπιέναι), διατίθεμαι, δίδωμι, δίίσταμαι, εἰμί, ἐξίσταμαι, ἔπειμι (ἐπιέναι), ἵσταμαι, μεταδίδωμι, πρόειμι (προϊέναι), and so on.

– The middle voice is still extant (γενήσει O I, 29; γένηται O XI, 6; ἐξελεύσονται N 19; εἰσελεύσει N 19; ἐξελεύσεται N 42; εἰσακούσεται N 46; διέθετο N 122; λήψεται N 135; προσευξάμενος N 140; προσευξάμενοι N 142) and has not yet been replaced by the active or the passive voice, except for ὑποκριθείς (< ὑποκρινάμενος) O IX, 2 and ἀποδράσουσι (< ἀποδράσονται) N 154.

– The dative case is used frequently; it appears in the texts with almost all its syntactical functions (pure dative [indirect object], instrumental and locative dative)[6].

– The use of the optative: δράσειας O I, 11 (which is, by the way, the only optative).

– Participle constructions, both as adjectives and as adverbs, are frequently used; the predicative adjunct, on the contrary, occurs only twice (N 40)[7]. For the genitive absolute, see O II, 13; O VIII, 6; O IX, 7 (which in our opinion does not belong to the oracle itself); O XIV, 8/9; O XV, 7; 8; N 10; N 79; N 112/113; N 122/123; N 141.

– The infinitive has not yet been replaced by ἵνα- or ὅτι-constructions.

– With a neuter plural as subject the verb still appears in the singular: O VI, 7 (post correcturam); N 9; N 68; N 80; see, however, O VI, 5 and O VIII, 8, where we find verbs in the plural.

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One may wonder whether, with all these archaizing elements, there is still any room left for the characteristic forms of post-classical Greek. The answer is yes, but it is an undeniable fact that the authors of the *Oracles of Leo* and the *Tale of the True Emperor* did their very best to minimalize the number of post-classical forms as much as they could.

The orthography is a feast for the eyes: iotacisms in all sorts and kinds (ει instead of η, ι, οι; η instead of ει, ι, οι, υ; ι instead of ει, η, οι, υ; υ instead of ει, η, ι; υι instead of ει); ο instead of ω and vice versa; αι instead of ε; single intervocalic consonants instead of double consonants and, less frequently, vice versa; forms without iota subscript (in about 40% of all cases); -υ- instead of -β- (ἐυδοματικῷ ἐυδόμῳ N 5; ἐυδόμῃ N 37); -στ- instead of -σθ- (λήστια = λοῖσθια O VIII, 15); unaspirated forms instead of aspirated ones and vice versa. Although these spelling mistakes are indicative of fundamental changes in the phonological structure of the Greek language, it is reasonable to assume that they should not be ascribed to the authors themselves, but to the many scribes who copied the texts throughout the centuries. We will not enumerate all these silly mistakes (for matters of orthography, see the notes attached to the translation).

Features of post-classical Greek are:

– Comparative plus article instead of superlative: ὁ μείζων ἀστήρ O XII, 7.

– Verbs in a clearly demotic form: δέρνω < δέρω (δερνόντων O IX, 7; however, in our opinion, this line does not belong to the oracle itself, but forms a caption to the picture); verbs that were formed after the classical period: χύνω < χέω formed from the aorist ἔχυσα (χύσαντες N 115)[8]; ἐξουθενέω, a Koine form typical of the New Testament[9].

– Verbal forms that do not exist in classical Greek or are used only sporadically (as a secondary form) and that were created or became popular only in the post-classical period (often as a result of the normalization of the paradigm), such as: the perfect form τέτευχα (Att. τετύχηκα): τέτευχας O IV, 7 (post correcturam) and O XVI, 2; the aorist ἔζησα (Att. ἐβίων): ζήσας O VI, 9; οἴδασι O XIII, 3 (Att. ἴσασι); the aorist ἤξα (Att. ἤγαγον): ἄξατε O XIII, 10 (but see συναγαγών O XII, 5); the aorist ἔφθασα (Att. ἔφθην): φθάσας O XVI, 5; the perfect participle ἐξεστηκότες N 111 (Att. ἐξεστῶτες); the passive form of the future tense ὁραθήσομαι, derived from the aorist passive ἐωράθην (Att. ὤφθην): ὁραθήσεται N 118 (next to forms of the future tense that derive from the aorist ὤφθην in O IV, 4; O VIII, 3; O XII, 7; O XIII, 6).

– Although most perfect tense forms are used to indicate the result of an action in accordance with the rules of ancient Greek, there is one example of a perfect used instead of an aorist (the confusion of these two tenses began in the Hellenistic period): δεδώ-

[5] See Browning, *Medieval Greek*, pp. 31-32; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 60 (4.9) and 88-89 (5.8).

[6] See Browning, *Medieval Greek*, pp. 36-37; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 58-59 and 124-126.

[7] Both texts abound with participles: there are 196 participles in total, of which 81 are used in an adverbial sense (41%), 113 as an adjective (58%) and only 2 as a predicative adjunct (1%). However, there is a marked difference between the *Oracles of Leo* (47 participles used in an adverbial sense [71%] and 19 as an adjective [29%]) and the *Tale of the True Emperor* (34 participles used in an adverbial sense [26%] and 94 as an adjective [72%], used mainly to denote the features of the true emperor).

[8] For the development of verbs in -νω, see Browning, *Medieval Greek*, p. 65; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 235-238.

[9] See Bl.Debr.Rk., *Grammatik*, p. 86 (§ 108, 2).

κασι N 4 (Att. ἔδοσαν); in N 138 we find the 'correct' form: ἔδωκας[10].

– The aorist subjunctive is frequently used to indicate the future tense[11]. Because of the phonological changes of the Greek language, it is often difficult to establish whether we are dealing with a form of the active voice of the aorist subjunctive or of the future indicative (most endings are phonologically identical, except for the second and third persons plural). But the distinction between aorist and future is easily recognizable if the root of the verb or the voice is different in both tenses; and of course, in the passive voice of aorist and future, there is an obvious distinction: see πέσῃς (Att. πέσει) O III, 7; εὕρητε (Att. εὑρήσετε) O XIII, 9; ἐνηχηθῇ (Att. ἐνηχηθήσεται) N 12; εἴπῃ (Att. λέξει or ἐρεῖ) N 14; N 15; N 18; N 135; πάσωσιν (Att. πάσουσιν) N 45; εἴπωσι (Att. λέξουσι) N 138 (cf. λαλήσουσι N 147); φύγωσι (Att. φεύξονται) N 142; καλέσωσιν (Att. καλοῦσιν) N 143. In O XI, 7 we find the exact opposite: the use of future indicative instead of aorist subjunctive: βλέπε μή γένηται (aorist subjunctive) [...] καρήσει (future indicative) [...] ἀχριωθήσει (future indicative).

– As for the use of the infinitive, we occasionally find constructions that used to be popular in Koine:

a. the substantivization of the infinitive in the genitive case in order to express a goal: προσκαλεῖται γάρ σε τοῦ ποιμαίνειν λαὸν περιούσιον N 16-17;

b. the substantivized infinitive, dependent on a preposition: διὰ τὸ μὴ χρησιμεύειν N 30-31 (in N 54 the 'classical' construction: εἰς οὐδὲν χρησιμεύων).

Both uses of the infinitive[12] should probably be viewed as literary reminiscences that go back to the Septuagint and the New Testament, seeing that the language of the *Tale of the True Emperor* is often very similar to the language of the Bible.

– The negative particle μή (and its derivations) is frequently used in combination with a participle instead of οὐ (a development that started in the Hellenistic period)[13], but it has certainly not replaced οὐ entirely: μὴ δεδοικώς O XV, 5; τὸν πτωχὸν καὶ μὴ ὑστερούμενον N 51; μὴ φαινόμενος N 134; παρ' οὐδενὸς βλεπόμενον καὶ παρὰ μηδενὸς γνωριζόμενον N 50; εἰς μηδὲν χρησιμεύσας N 102; μηδὲν χρησιμεύοντα N 103 (cf. ὡς οὐδὲν ὄντα καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν χρησιμεύοντα N 39-40; εἰς οὐδὲν χρησιμεύων N 54).

– Many of the classical prepositions disappeared in the vernacular in post-classical Greek and those that remained, were constructed with the accusative[14]. These changes

[10] See Browning, *Medieval Greek*, pp. 30 and 64; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 53, 77 and 118-119.

[11] See Browning, *Medieval Greek*, p. 31; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 75-76.

[12] See Bl.Debr.Rk., *Grammatik*, pp. 330-332 (§ 400) and 332-333 (§ 402); Browning, *Medieval Greek*, pp. 63-64; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 46-47.

[13] See Bl.Debr.Rk., *Grammatik*, pp. 355 (§ 426) and 358-359 (§ 430)

[14] See Browning, *Medieval Greek*, p. 37; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 216-217.

cannot be spotted in the *Oracles of Leo* and the *Tale of the True Emperor*[15], but it must be said that there is some confusion in the choice of the cases used in combination with prepositions.

The use of the prepositions εἰς and ἐν is somewhat confusing and εἰς sometimes has the meaning of the Modern Greek σε: εἰς τὰ τείχη σου O X, 3 (= ἐν τοῖς τείχεσί σου); εἰς τὸ τέλος τῶν Ἰσμαηλιτῶν N 6 (cf. εἰς τὰ τέλη τῶν ἡμερῶν N 41 and N 104), but ἐν τῷ τέλει O IX, 10; εἰς τὸ οὖς αὐτοῦ εἴπῃ N 14 and εἰς τὰ ὦτα αὐτοῦ λαλήσουσι N 147; ἐλαίας ἔχων εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μέρη, εἴς τε τὸ ὑπομάζιον N 70-71 (= στὰ δεξιὰ μέρη καὶ στὸ ὑπομάζιον); φέρουσι αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ Σιών N 129-130 and ἄξουσιν ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ N 145, but ἀνάξουσιν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν μεγάλην Σιών N 139-140. The preposition εἰς is once used where ἐπί would have been more correct: χοῦν εἰς τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν πάσαντες N 114 (cf. χοῦν πάσωσιν ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν N 45).

The genitive and the dative case after ἐπί are sometimes used without any apparent distinction in meaning. Both cases are used to indicate "on" in a local sense, not only the correct genitive: ἐπ' ὤμων O XI, 5; ἐπὶ τοῦ στήθους N 33-34; ἐπὶ τῶν πλευρῶν N 34; ἐπί τοῦ τραχήλου N 35 (see also N 72 and N 90), but also the accusative: ἐπὶ τοὺς δύο ὠμοπλάτας N 33; ἐπὶ τὸν αὐχένα N 34; ἐπὶ τὴν δεξιὰν ὀφρύν N 72.

On two occasions ἐπί is used with genitive instead of accusative or instead of εἰς: δώσουσι τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς N 44 (cf. τὰ μέτωπα αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν γῆν κρούσαντες N 113-114); ἀναβιβάσαντες ἐφ' ὑψηλοῦ τόπου N 142-143.

– There is a tendency to substitute the pronoun αὐτός for the pronoun οὗτος as an alternative way of expressing the personal pronoun of the third person and the possessive pronoun (in the genitive)[16]. Οὗτος can still be found, both in the *Oracles* and the *Tale* (e.g. κἂν μηδεὶς τοῦτον βλέπῃ O XIII, 3; τὰ τούτου μέλη O VIII, 9)[17], but hardly as frequently as αὐτός. Another post-classical feature is that αὐτοῦ/αὐτῶν is used in order to refer to the subject of the sentence; however, this happens only sparingly, and in particular in the *Tale*, in phrases that show striking similarities to biblical Greek: ὃς ἔχει τοὺς δακτύλους αὐτοῦ δρεπανωτούς O X, 6; ἐπιθήσει κύριος τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ N 40; δώσουσι τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς N 44.

– Interesting is also the excessive use of the connective καί[18], especially in the *Tale of the True Emperor*, where in some passages almost every sentence starts with καί. We

[15] Ἀπό is constructed with the genitive, except for N 162, ἀπὸ παλαιώτατον βιβλίον, but lines 162-163 probably form a personal comment of the scribe, not of the author.

[16] See Bl.Debr.Rk., *Grammatik*, pp. 228-230 (§§ 277-278) and 233-235 (§ 284); Browning, *Medieval Greek*, pp. 61-62; Horrocks, *Greek*, pp. 58 and 74-75.

[17] The fact that οὗτος is used more frequently than αὐτός in the nominative case, is not surprising because αὐτός then usually bears the meaning "self" and not "he".

[18] Καί occurs 207 times, 54 times in the *Oracles* and 153 times in the 161 lines of the *Tale*.

may view this as an indication that parataxis gradually prevails over hypotaxis, a development that goes back to Koine. In this respect, too, the *Tale* appears to have been deeply influenced by the language of the Septuagint and the New Testament[19].

[19] See Bl.Debr.Rk., *Grammatik*, pp. 367-372 (§ 442); Horrocks, *Greek*, p. 92.

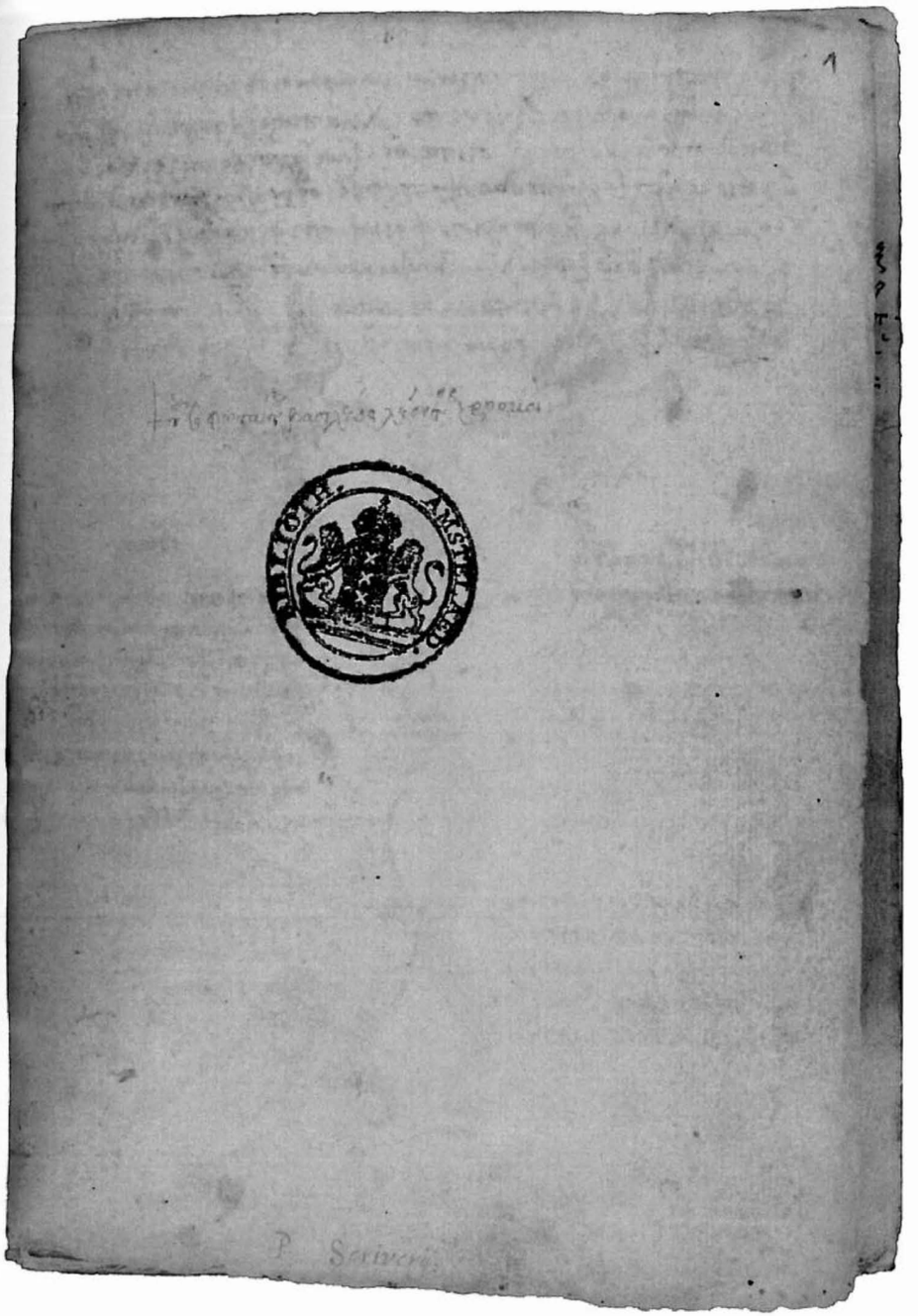
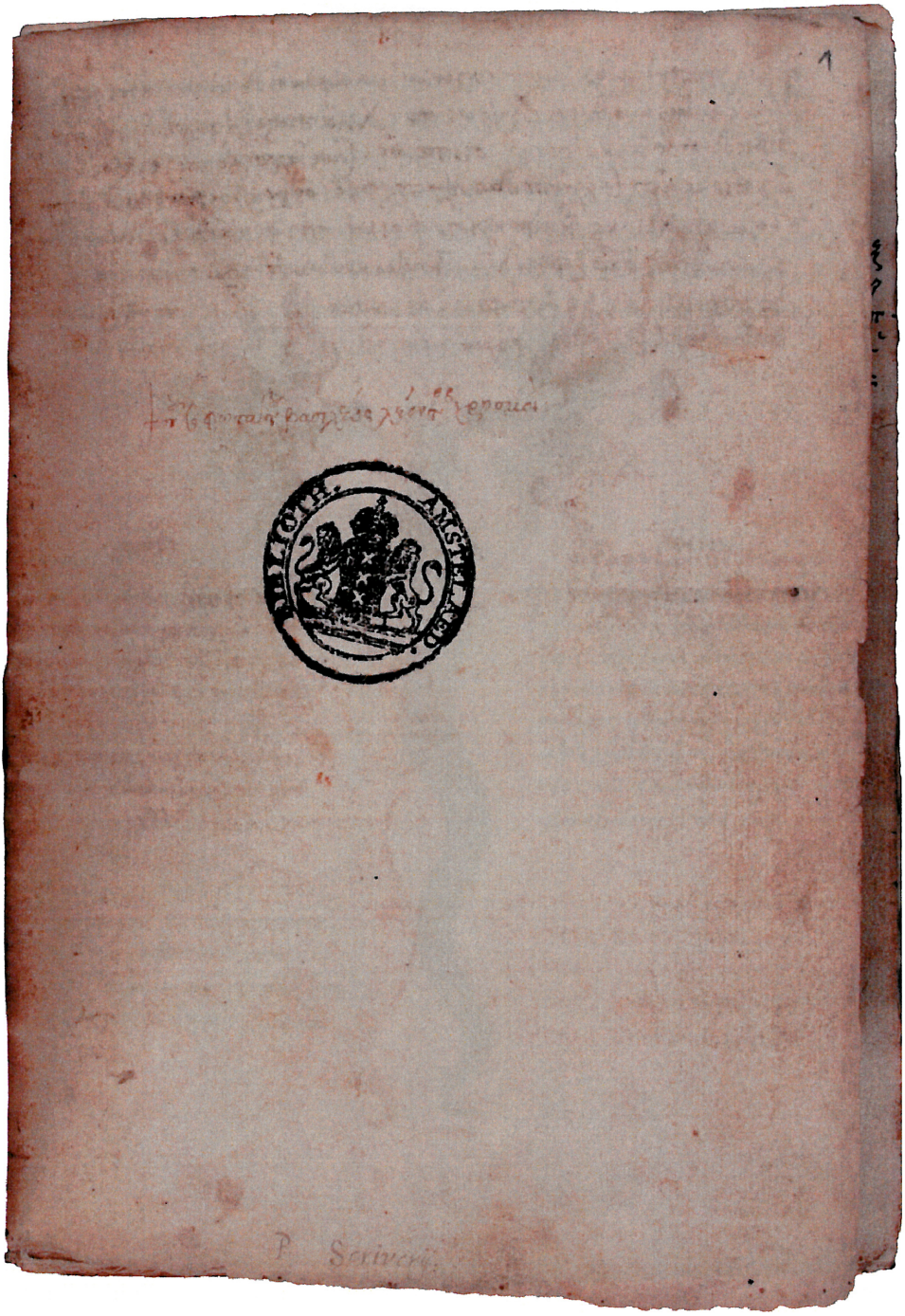


Plate 1 F 1r



+ μοναρχία·
Καὶ θρασὺς αὐτὸ μόνῳ σὰ καὶ ταχὺς πέλῃς, Καὶ πρὸς μάχας ἕτοιμος ὦ ῥύζης ἅνως·
ἀλλ' ἴσα σὴ καρδία ἀλθῇ·
τοῦτοις ἐν ὕβρεσι καὶ πρὸς ἁπαντᾶς, ὃν σοὶ γὰρ ἀεὶ καὶ τέλος κῆρας πέλει·
ἐχθρὸς δ' ἄκοσμος τοῖς λόγοις κεκτημένῳ σὺ
κἀμοὶ μετίζῃς, ἀπερ ἡνίων φίλῳ σὺ·

ωηιστικός:

+ ἄλλη τις ἄρκτος, δ' αὖτ' ἀσκυμνοτρόφος;
καὶ πάντοτ' ἀκέσει μὴ πλωῶσα γραφθῇ:

+ περὶ ἥλια δὲ περσικὰ τὸ ῥαπεφά:

+ μυρισμοὺς ἐκφέρουσι τοῦ
κράτους ὅλου:

φύσιν χρόνων κίνησις ἐξ ἣν βοᾳ καινῆ:
εἰς ἐσχάτων δ' γράφεται τῆς ἐσχάτης:

Ἔφορος:
Ὁραγῶν παλιν καὶ ξένον ὀντως τρόπον
δρέπανον καὶ ῥόδον ὃ περφέρει
Δρεπανηφόρε τετράμμωνον
σοι γράφω πρωτόλιασθ'
πάντας ἀναλώτας ξίφει:
Μαιῶν ἀδύλων πρὸς μικροῦ
ἀνειμένης τρῆς τρῆς ὀξυγώνιος
ἐμβίου κύκλος ἱερῶν ἡ θη
πρὸς αὐλῶν, δυόλιθον ὑν
μέσω:
Τρίτον δυσσύμβωνον πρῶτος ἰχεῖ
Διέξησαν δ' κὰ τὰ παλαίζωνι γλώσσαι:

Εὐχησις.
Οὗτος ἀκοντιστὴς ὁ ξίφει πουδράχων.
ξίφος ῥόδον τανῦν ὁρμῶν εἰς θέρος.
ἀφ' οὗ σαι σου πρόαρχεν
ὁ ἐμμανὴς· ὅρα αὐτὸν ἀ
προαρχῆσαι φρίξαι· τὸ
ῥόδον φέρων σὺν σοὶ
ἀκόντιος· σὺν τοῖσι
σοῖς μίσον ὡς μάστιν.
ψυχὴ σου ταχὺν ὡς ῥόδον τεμὼν ῥόδον· κύκλοις κύνηδὸς ὡς ἀστὸν τοῦ
σοῖς ἐν κλάδοις, καὶ σὸν βλαστάνον αὐτόν.

αἷμα :
καὶ τρὸς μαχομένους ὀργιομένους· ἡρεμοῦσι τὰ ξιφη· πρὸ χιλιάδας ἐξ ἑκατὸν μιζυρώσας :
καὶ τὰς ἀσθενικὰς φωνὰς μέχρι ἐνιαυτοῦ· μέχρις οὗ παῖς ἄοπλος ἀφρενοφθόρος· τελειοτελέσει τὰ πράγματα τοῦ φόνου :
Πῆς ἀφθονία τῆς ἡρεμώσης δάκρυα χεῖ,
καὶ πέντε πρωτοκλαυτμοὶ ἀρχὰς·
δρακόντων τὰ σύριγξ οὐ σημείωσιν τομήν,
λύσαρκα μιλίσυλλοῦσα τὰ τοῦ τόμου :

εὐχαριστία:
Τὴν ἀλωπεκῶν ὑποκριθεὶς φιλίαν, καὶ μακροθύμως τὴν φρένα χαλινώσας·
ὡς ἄν πρέσβυς καὶ πολιὸς ἐκ φρενῶν, ἤτοι δὲ δεσπότης ταῖς νήσοις ἐπάρχε-
Καὶ προχυθεὶς φόνου αἱμάτων ἐκχυθέντων, οὐ τῆς νίκης ἀπολαύσας
τὰς χεῖρας ἀχαρίστως· καὶ βραβεῖον εἴληφας ἐν τῷ τέλει
τοῦ σκήπτρου:~

6
Ἐξουσία:
Οὐαί σοι πόλις ἑπτάλοφε· ὅταν τὸ εἰκοστὸν στοιχεῖον εὐφημίζεται εἰς τὰ τείχη σου·
τότε ἤγγικεν ἡ πτῶσις ἡ καὶ ἀπώλεια τῶν δυναστευόντων σου, καὶ τῶν ἀδίκως κρινόντων:-
ὃς ἔχει τοὺς δακτύλους αὐτοῦ δρεπανωτούς ὅ ἐστι
δρέπανον τῆς ἐρημώσεως· καὶ ἐν τῷ ὑψίστῳ βλασφημία:
κ̃

Ἰω
Ἰω
Κω
πγιαρ
Ἰχθύος ὑποστὼ φόνου αἵματος
Ἰωὴ χαριστία :
καὶ κῶ ἡ τοῦ στόχου δύναμις ·
βλέπε δὲ σὺ ὁ τάδε ἵα φονᾶν καὶ τὰδε φέρειν ἀστώμων ·
μισουμένοις ὁμειδοχθὴς καὶ πόλον ἁρπάσαι σὺν ἥλιος
ὥρᾳ · καὶ μάλιστα ἀχειρωθήσῃ αὐτὸς ὁ φόνου σύμβουλος αὖ -
θις δὲ ὁ ὄνομα ἰῶ · καὶ ἀστοκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἡλιακὸς
ἀστώνομος, μὴ ναχθῇς : -
μονόκ

ὤαβζα :

† ὁ νεκρὸς ἤδη καὶ θεαλεκτοσμένος· οἴδασι πολλοὶ κἂν μηδεὶς τοῦτον
βλέπει· ὡς ἐκ μέθης δὲ φανεὶς ἀθρόως· σκῆπτρα κρατήσει τῆς δὲ
τῆς βασιλίδος· τέλος γὰρ ὤφθη ἐς, ἐν πόλῳ κεκλεισμένος :—

ρω σ ε φ

πραΐω ὑψήμου τὸ μέλλον ὀξὺ τάξιν εἰδέναι
μου· ἐς πάλιν ἑξῆς ἑπτάλοφε τὸ κράτος :

ν σ θ ε λ φ ο

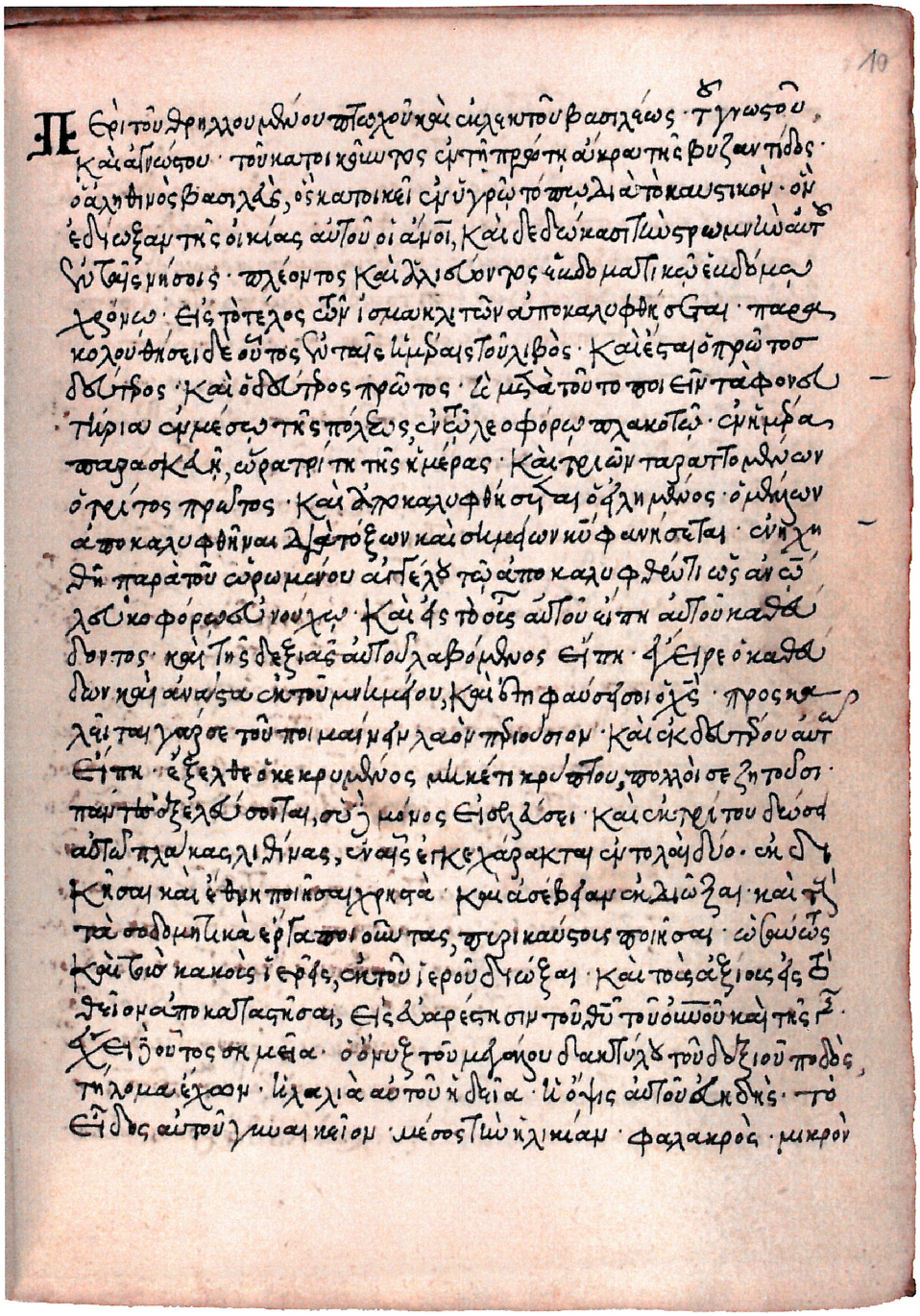
Ν ϭ ο μ τ κ ζ ε ι Δ

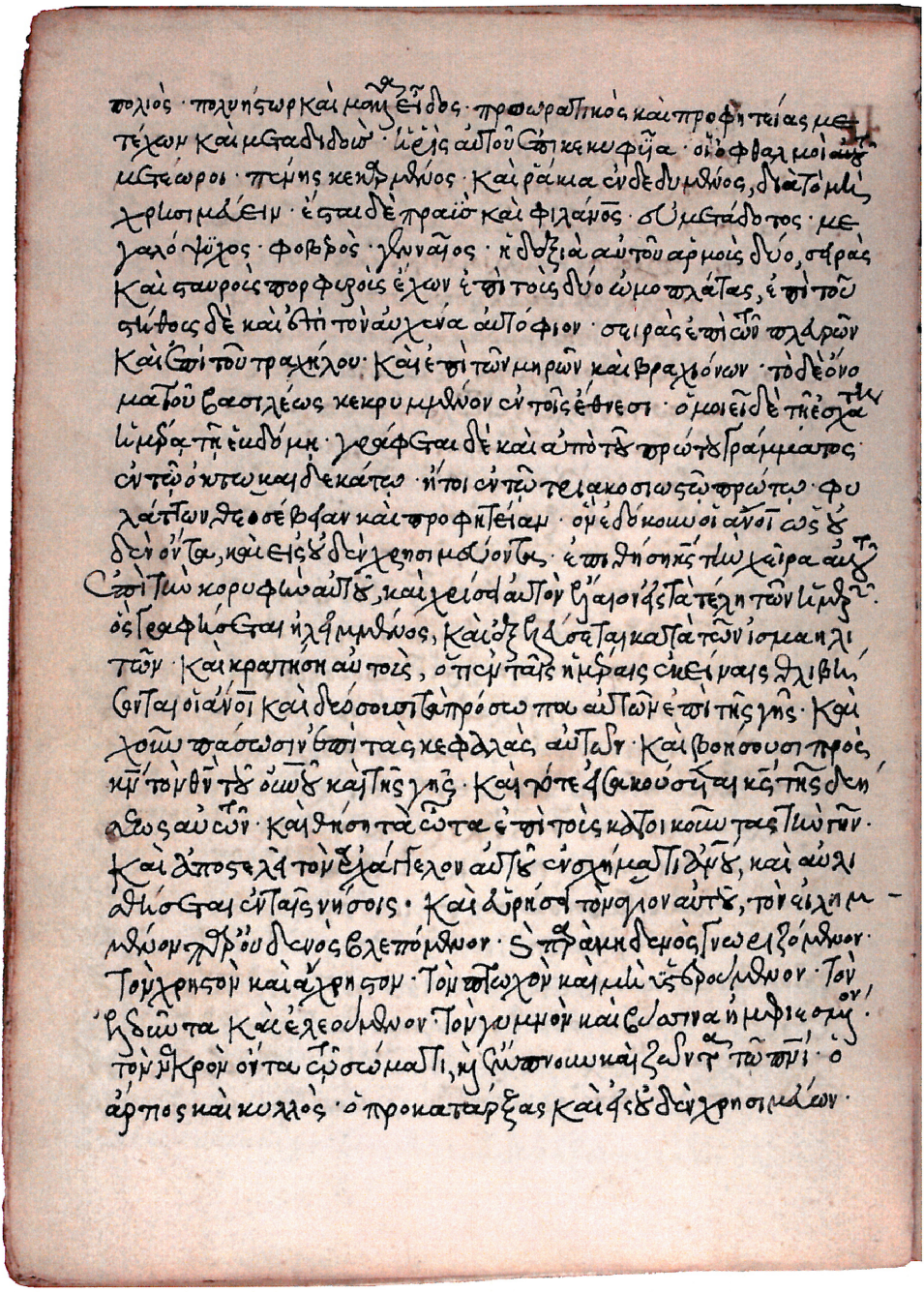
Κῆρυξ ἀφανὴς τρὶς ἀνακράξει μέγα· ἄπιτε ποῦ δὴ πρόδρομοι ἑπτα-
λόφου· αἴρητε δ' ἄνδρα οἰκέτην ἐμὸν φίλον, ἄξατε τοῦτον ἐν βασιλείοις
δόμοις, μὴν τοῦ κρανομίλυχον :

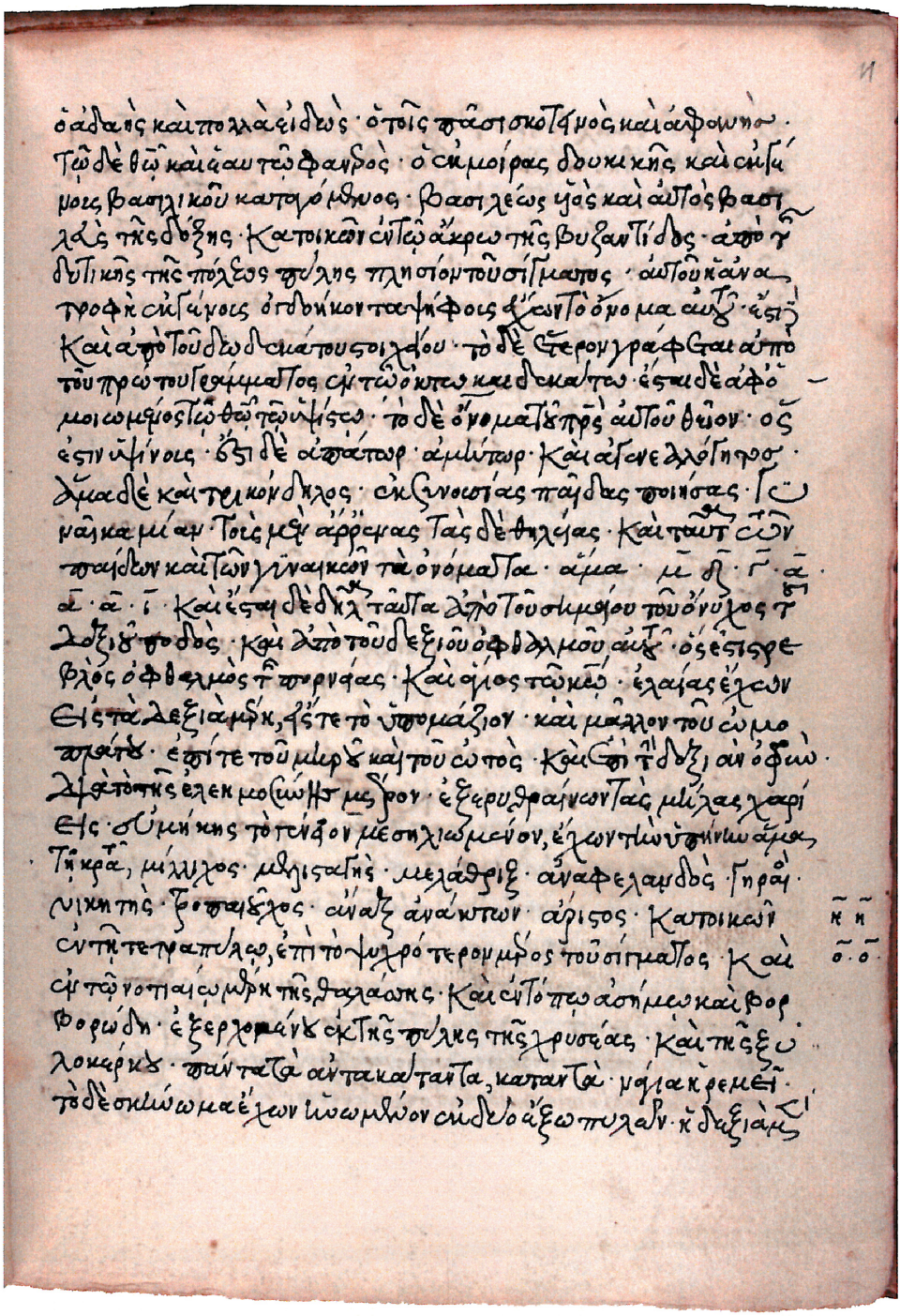
ἀρχὴ τῆς μίμησις
8
Ἰδοὺ πανάγιε σὺν πρώτοις ἑπτὰ κύκλοις γραμμὴ προέρχεται ἀπὸ πέτρας ὄψιλου καὶ δευτέρου ἁλμυρὸν ἀρχέτυπος δὲ χιὼν ποιήσεις ἀλληθεσάτης
ζ δύναμις
ὁ μὲν ἀρτιακὴς ἀρτίων δὶς πολλαπλασιασθεὶς τὸν ὑλιονάφθαν γεννᾷ πέτραν
C

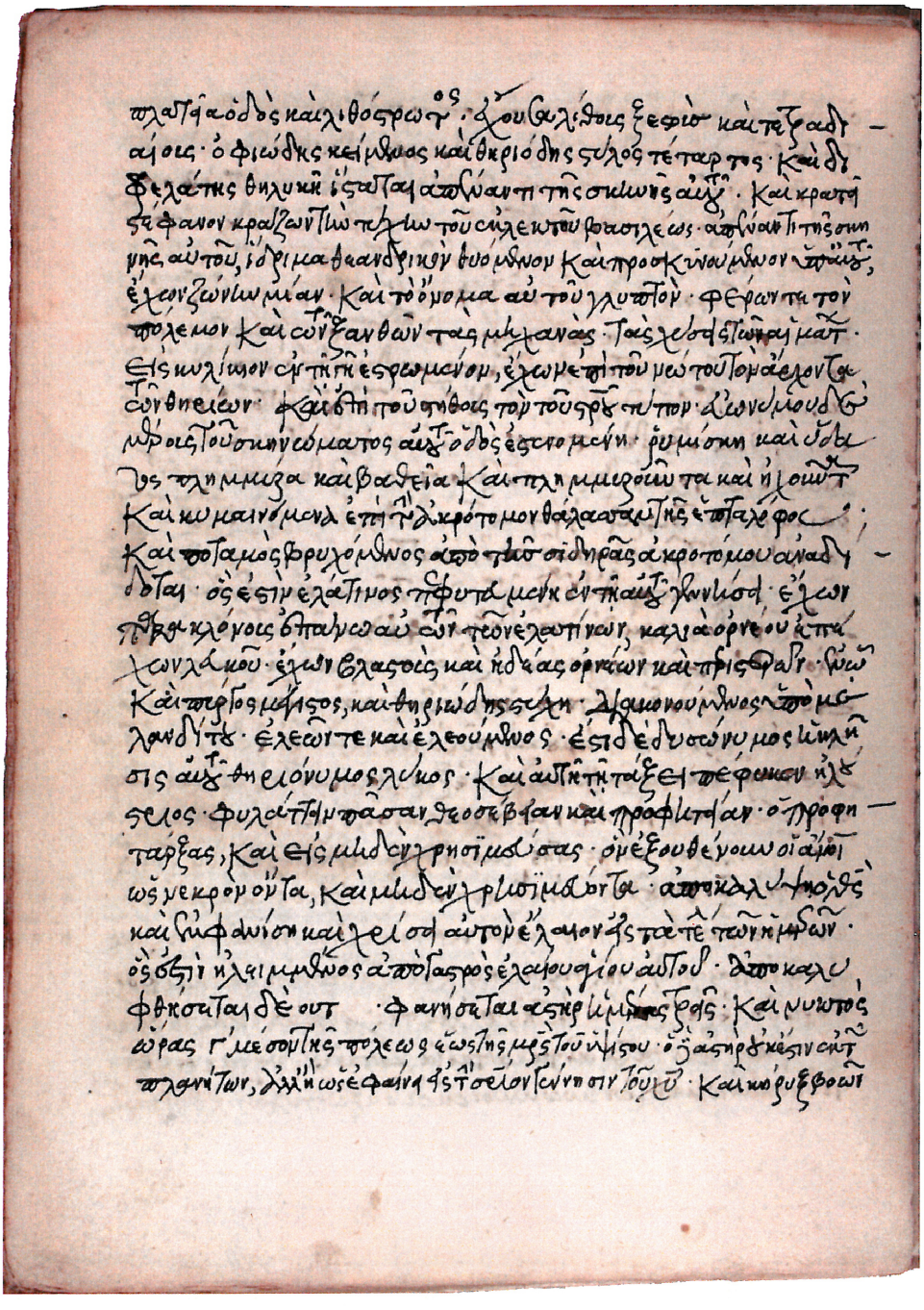
Προχειρικός:

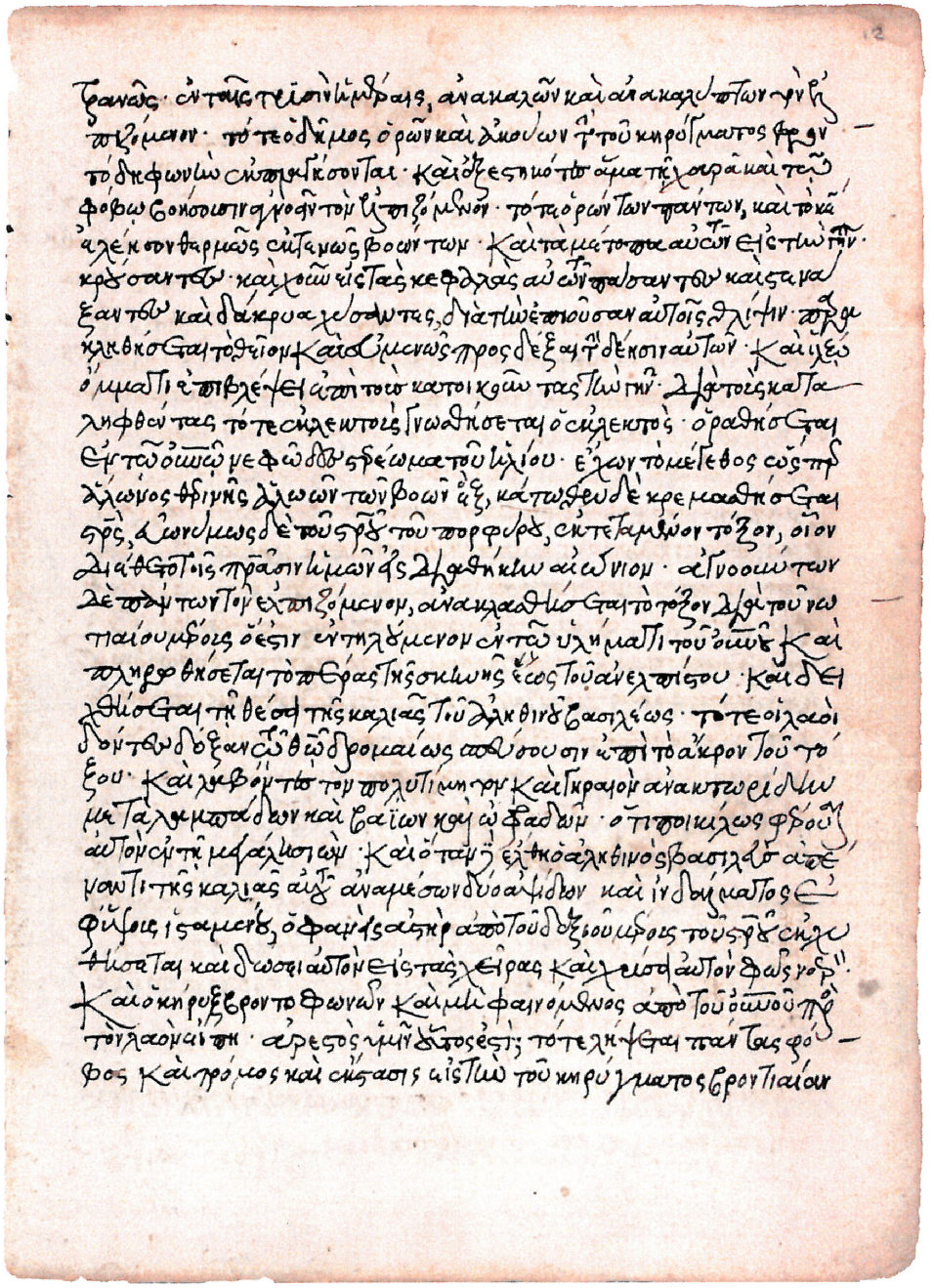
+ δέξαι τὸ δῶρον μὴ κατοκνήμονι γέρων· ἀλλὰ λαβὼν κράτιστε τὸ τέλος ἔχει·
Καὶ πρὸς καλὸν μὲν ἴθυνε τὴν σκηπτουχίαν· τὸ ἅπαντα πάντα μηδὲ δῆμος τῶν χρόνων.
καὶ γενναίως δὲ τοῦτον εἴληφας μόνον· ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐπαγαῖς ἐν κύκλῳ μὲν χρόνου·
μιᾶς δεκάδος, ἀστέρος πληρουμένου· καλῶς τελεῖται τῶν καθιερουμένων·
Τί δὲ τεθηπὼς ἀτέλειαν εἰσδέχῃ· ἀφ᾽ οὗ ἄριστε τὴν φυτοῦ κατοικίαν·
ἕπου καλῶς τῇ πρὸς προκειμένων δόξαν· καλῶς δ᾽ ἀνέφυσας τὴν ἐν
ἀγλαΐαις ἡμέραν· καλοῦ τέλους ἐμπόλησον ἅπασαν ἐλπίσιν· καὶ πρὸς
μόναρχον ὁ δοῦλος τάς ὁσίοις· ἐν σοὶ γὰρ ἀρχὴ τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ τέλος: +

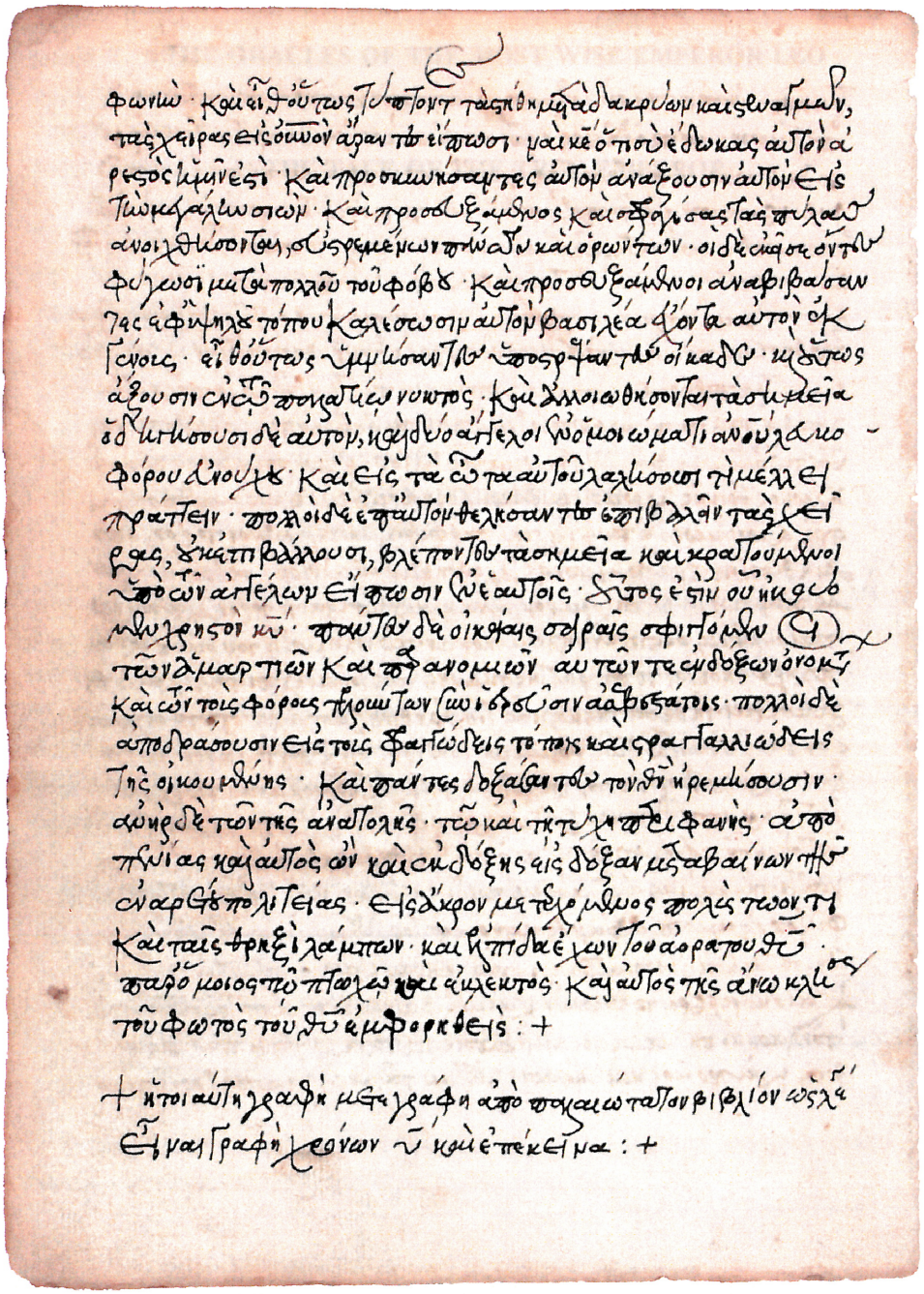












THE ORACLES OF THE MOST WISE EMPEROR LEO

&

THE TALE OF THE TRUE EMPEROR

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

EDITION AND TRANSLATION

This is a diplomatic edition. Nevertheless, as a concession to readability, we have placed the breathings and accents where they ought to be placed (though we did not intervene whenever the scribe wrote an incorrect breathing or accent). We also wrote σ for a sigma in the inner position and ς for a sigma in the final position. Apart from these minor changes, we present the texts just as they are found in the manuscript.

When the text of an oracle is written around the accompanying picture (nos. II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII and XIII), we read it crosswise: top – bottom – left – right (and not top – left – right – bottom, as in the existing editions). When read in this order the texts improve dramatically, and it should also be noted that none other than Niketas Choniates (p. 355, 8-15) quotes the verses of oracle IV in the very same order.

In the Greek text we use the following symbols:

<...>	word missing in the manuscript.
(...)	solution to abbreviations and ligatures.
/	end of line in the manuscript.

In the critical apparatus we compare the text of the manuscript with the editions by Rutgersius and Lambecius. We decided to limit ourselves to these two editions, because Lambecius made use of the Amsterdam manuscript as well as of Rutgersius' edition. By the edition of Lambecius the original edition of 1655 is meant, for in Migne's 'reprint' of 1863 considerable changes have been introduced. The apparatus is negative: when Rutgersius or Lambecius are not mentioned, it means that they offer the same reading as our manuscript.

In the translation we use the following symbols:

...	corrupt word in the manuscript.
<...>	word missing in the manuscript.
[...]	added by the translators by way of explanation.
[[...]]	one or more lines that we do not consider to be part of the oracle in question, but that presumably form a caption to the picture.

In the notes to the translation we propose alternative readings and conjectural emendations. The reader may also find some explanations there.

CONSPECTUS SIGLORUM

A	Amstelodamensis Graecus VI E 8
La	Lambecius, Oracula 1655 (≠ 1863)
Ru	Rutgersius, Oracula 1618

I.1 ‹...›

Τὴν ἐχθροποιὸν ἔνδοθ(εν) κρύπτει πλάνην·
ὡς εὐμενὴς δὲ, κῦνας ἐκτρέφει νέους· /
ἣν ὡς λλιγοὺς κλύδωνος ἔχεις μέσον·
ἀλλ᾽ ἀπαλλάξει τὸν λογισμὸν ὁ χρόνος· /
ὄφις δὲ πάντας καταναλώσει τάχος·
συνεγαλουχεὶς καὶ γέγηθας ἀθλί(ω)ς· /
(καὶ) χεῖρας ἁπλεῖς καὶ πόδας διαστρέφεις·
ὃς πραγμάτων ἔξωθ(εν) αὐτὸν / ἐξάγων·
ἀλλ᾽ ὁ κ(ύριο)ς τ(ὴν) ὑπόκρισιν φαίνει·
τὶ γὰρ κακὸν δράσειας, ὦ σὺ / κῦνώπα;
ὁ τῷ ξένῳ δήγματι συγκεκραμένος·
πῶς σὺ κομίσεις ἀγαθ(όν) / τὶ τῷ βίῳ,
ὃς τὸ στόμα κέχυνας εἰς ὑποπτέρους· /
πῶς ἀπορεύξει ῥῆμα χρηστὸν τῇ πόλει; /

1 *deest titulus in A*: αἶμα *La (ex* I.2 *translatum)*. **4** λλιγούς *A*: γλυκύς *Ru, La* | ἔχεις μέσον *A*: ἐκχεῖ εἰς μέσον *Ru, La*. **5** ἀπαλλάξει *A*: ἀπελέγξει *Ru, La*. **7** συνεγαλουχείς *A*: σὺ μεγαλαυχεῖς *Ru, La* | ἀθλίως *A*: ἄθλιε *Ru, La*. **8** ἁπλεῖς *A*: ἁπλοῖς *Ru, La*. **9** ὅς *A*: ὡς *Ru, La* | αὐτόν *A*: αὐτόν *Ru, La*. **10** φαίνει *A*: φανεῖ *Ru, La*. **11** κακόν *A*: καλόν *Ru, La* | κῦνώπα *A*: κυνόπα *Ru, La*. **13** ἀγαθὸν τί *A*: ἀγαθόν τι *Ru, La*. **14** κέχυνας *A*: κέχηνας *Ru, La*. **15** ἀπορεύξει *A*: ἀπερεύξεις *Ru, La*.

I.1 <...>[1]

The deceit that causes enmity you hide[2] within you
– and seemingly well-disposed, you raise[3] young dogs –
which you have as ...[4] in your sea of troubles.
Time, however, will reveal[5] your reasoning
and a serpent will quickly devour all of them.
You fawn, suckle[6] and rejoice in a miserable way,
holding out[7] your hands and curling your toes
as[8] in an effort to save yourself[9] from trouble.
The Lord, however, will expose your hypocrisy.
What kind of good[10] could you do, you shameless dog,
you who are closely attached to a foreign sting?
How will you bring a blessing into life,
you who have your mouth opened wide[11] towards winged creatures?
How will any word you utter[12] ever benefit the city?

[1] The title, the first two verses and the accompanying picture are missing in the manuscript; see the introduction, pp. 24, 25 and 41-42. [2] For κρύπτει read κρύπτεις. [3] For ἐκτρέφει read ἐκτρέφεις. [4] We were not able to emendate the corrupt Greek word λλιγούς in a satisfactory way. [5] For ἀπαλλάξει read ἀπελέγξει. [6] For συνεγαλουχείς read σαίνεις, γαλουχεῖς. [7] Read ἁπλοῖς. [8] Read ὡς. [9] Read αὐτόν. [10] For κακόν read καλόν. [11] Read κέχηνας. [12] For ἀπορεύξει read ἀπερεύξει.

16 ἐν μέσω δύο κωράκων κ(αὶ) /
ὑποπτέρων ἀναλωθήσει:

I.2 αἷμα: /

Τὸ δεύτερον τέκνον ἄλλο θηρίον·
20 ἡ / πτάμενός τε πρὸς μεσημβρί(αν)·
καὶ / ὄφις ἡπτάμενος μέλανι καὶ μέλας· /
ὅλος δεινὸς τὸ φῶς κώραξιν ἀφη / ρημένος·
γένος γὰρ αἰσχρὸν τῶν / ἀφ' ἡλίου πέλων·
οἰκτρῶς κλονί / σεις σαυτὸν ἅμα καὶ πόλιν·
25 κ(αὶ) σοῦ / στεναγμὸν τῷ θέρει ἔαρ: /

Καὶ γραμμικοῖς σχήμασι δηλ(ῶν) / τὸν χρόνον·
ὃς ὑστερήσ(ει) τοῦ π(ατ)ρικοῦ / τὸ τέλος·
ἄρκτον δ' ὀλετὴρ ὢν ὁ / ὄφις τάλας μόνος·
ὦ πῶς γενή / σει βρῶμα δεινῶν κωράκ(ων):

16/17 *non sunt oraculi pars, sed figurae interpretatio.* **16** μέσω *A*: μέσῳ *Ru, La* | κωράκων *A*: κοράκων *Ru, La.* **19** τὸ δεύτερον τέκνον *A*: τὸ δεύτερόν τι καινόν *Ru, La.* **20** ἡπτάμενος *A*: ἱπτάμενος *Ru, La.* **21** καὶ ὄφις *A*: ὄφις *Ru, La* | ἡπτάμενος *A*: βαπτόμενος *Ru, La.* **22** κώραξιν *A*: κόραξιν *Ru, La* | ἀφηρημένος *A*: ἀφῃρημένος *Ru.* **24** κλονίσεις *A*: κλονήσεις *Ru, La.* **25** θέρει *A*: θέρι *La* | ἔαρ *A*: ἔαρ φανεῖ *Ru, La.* **26** σχήμασι *A*: χρήμασι *Ru.* **27** ὅς *A*: ὥς *Ru*: ὡς *La qui in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina et* οἷς *construit.* **28** ἄρκτον *A*: ἄρκτου *Ru, La* | ὢν ὁ *A*: ὧν *Ru, La.* **29** κωράκων *A*: κοράκων *Ru, La.*

16 [[Between[1] two ravens[2] and
winged creatures you will be devoured]]

I.2 Blood

The second [symbol] is a child, another beast,
20 a serpent, flying[3] to the South
and immersed[4] in black. And you, entirely black [yourself],
horribly[5] deprived[6] of the light [in your eyes] by ravens[7],
you who belong, indeed, to an abominable family from the East,
you will pitifully throw yourself and the city into disarray,
25 and spring <will pass on> your lamentations to the summer.

And in linear figures you indicate the time
by which[8] your end will be inferior to that of your father.
You alone are[9] the wretched serpent, the bear-killer[10].
Oh, how you will fall prey to horrible ravens[11]!

---

[1] Read μέσῳ. [2] Read κοράκων. [3] Read ἱπτάμενος. [4] For ἡπτάμενος read βαπτόμενος. [5] Read δεινῶς. [6] Read ἀφῃρημένος. [7] Read κόραξιν. [8] For ὅς read ᾧ. [9] For ὄν read ὤν. [10] For ἄρκτον read ἄρκτου. [11] Read κοράκων. Cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 41, 12-13.

II μετάνοια /

δυττὸν τὸ τρίτον καὶ γὰρ ὄρνις ἡπτότης·
στ(αυ)ροῦχος ὄρνις ἵππος δ᾽ αὖ κερασφόρος: /

† ὡς ἄγαν ὀξὺς ὡς θρασύς τε καὶ λάχνος,
ἀρχὴν ἔχων τὲ τ(ὴν) μονάδα κ(αὶ) τέλος: /

μονάδος διπλῆς κλήσ(εω)ς / πρώτης μόνης·
ξυσμοῖς / ἀριθμῶν, ὕστερον ἐν τῷ / χρόνῳ·
ὡς ἀγαθ(ὸν) πέ / φυνας ἡμέρου χρόνου· /
ἐν ᾗ κρατήσεις στ(αυ)ρικοῦ / τύπον μέσον: /

Ὁ παμμέγιστος ὀρνίθων τ᾽ ἄναξ / μόνος·
οὗτος γὰρ λαβὼν ἀρ / χὴν ἐκ μεσημβρίας·
ἐν ἵπ / πῳ παύσει καὶ ῥάει τῆς ἡ / μέρας·
πόλου μεσοῦντος / ἀστέρος τῆς ἡμέρας:

2 δυττόν *A*: διττόν *Ru, La* | ἡπτότης *A*: ἡπτότης *Ru, La quorum La in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina et* ἱππότης *construit* | ἦν ποτε *coni. Ru.* **7** ξυσμοῖς *A*: ξυσμούς *Ru, La.* **8** ἀγαθὸν πέφυνας ἡμέρου χρόνου *A*: ἀγαθοῦ πέφηνας ἡμέρον χρόνου *Ru, La quorum La in annotationibus* χρόνον *scribit.* **9** τύπον *A*: τύπου *Ru, La.* **12** καὶ ῥάει *A*: καὶ φάει *Ru, La quorum La in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina et* κερασφόρῳ *construit.*

II Repentance

Double[1] is the third [symbol], for it is a bird on horseback[2],
a bird holding a cross and a horse having a horn.

How passionate, how bold, how lecherous[3] you are,
you who have the unit at the beginning and at the end.

Calculating with the letters of only the first unit
of the double name, later in time
you have shown yourself[4] to be something good of a quiet time[5],
in which[6] you will reign in the sign[7] of the cross,

you, the mightiest of the birds and the only ruler.
Having assumed power in this way[8] from the South,
you will end your days on a horse having a horn[9],
when the morning star is in the centre of the vault of heaven.

[1] Read διττόν. [2] For ἡπτότης read ἱππότης. [3] For λάχνος read λάγνος. [4] Read πέφηνας. [5] The Greek text of these verses is questionable and so is the translation. [6] For ἐν ᾗ read ἐν ᾧ. [7] For τύπον read τύπου. [8] Read οὕτως. [9] For καὶ ῥάει read κεραιῷ or κεραῷ.

III † μοναρχία: /

Καὶ θρασὺς ὡς μάλιστα καὶ ταχὺς πέλεις,
καὶ πρὸς μάχας ἕτοιμος ὦ βύζης γένος: /

ἔχεις δ' ἀκοὰς τοῖς λόγοις κεκτημένας· /
καὶ χρεμετίζεις, ἄτερ ἡνίων φιλίας: /

ἀλλ' ἴστα στῆσαι κερδανεῖ λάβει λόγ(ον)· /

τόποις ἐν ὑγροῖς καὶ / παρ' ἐλπίδα πέσεις,
ἐν / σοὶ γὰρ ἀρχὴ καὶ τέ / λος κέρας πέλει:

---

4 τοῖς λόγοις: *A*: τοῖς λόγους *(sic!) Ru.* **5** ἡνίων *A*: ἡνίων *Ru, La* | φιλίας *A*: φυγάς *Ru, La.* **6** ἴστα στῆσαι κερδανεῖ λάβει λόγον *A*: ὑστάτη σὲ κερδανεῖ λαβὴ λόγου *La. post Ru conicientem sive haurientem ex Nic. Choniata 222, 68* | ἴστα *A*: ἵστα *Ru* | λάβει *A*: λαβέ *Ru.* **7** ἐλπίδα *A*: ἐλπίδας *Ru* | πέσεις *A*: πεσεῖς *Ru, La.* **8** κέρας *A*: κέρως *Ru.*

III Monarchy

How extremely bold and swift you are
and ready for combat, descendant of Byza[1]!

You keep your ears closed[2] to words
and you whinny without the reins[3] of friendship.

The last syllable of your name will prevail over you[4].

In wet places you will fall[5] unexpectedly,
for in you the beginning and the end is a horn.

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[1] Βύζα = Κωνσταντινούπολις; cf. *TGL*, s.v. and Preger, *Scriptores*, index, p. 334: Βύζη, ἡ: "nomen Byzantii". [2] For κεκτημένας read κεκλεισμένας. [3] For ἡνίων read ἡνίων. [4] Read ἀλλ' ὑστάτη σὲ κερδανεῖ λαβὴ λόγου; cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 222, 68. [5] Read πέσῃς; cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 41, 10-11.

IV † τομὴ: /

† ἡ βοῦς δὲ πέμπτον καὶ τέλος ἀρκτοτρόφου· /
τὸ σχῆμα φαίνει τὸν τόπον καὶ τὸν τρόπον: /

† ὅθεν μολήσας οἷος ὠφθείς μοι φίλος· /
πρῶτας γ(ὰρ) ἔχων ἀρετῶν ἄλλων πλέον: /

καὶ σωφρονίζεις σωφρονῶν / τοὺς φιλτάτους·
ὅθεν τὰ τεύχη / χρηστοτάτου τέλ(ους): /

μόνος τ᾽ ἐνωθεὶς ἐξ ἀνα / κτόρων κλέους·
κ(αὶ) τῶν / νεκρῶν κράτιστε λειπὼν / τὰ κράτη·
ὡς ἐν βραχὺ / γὰρ εὐτυχήσεις τοῦ κρά / τους:

in locum oraculorum IV et V oracula VI et VII transferunt Ru, La (folium 4 ante folium 3 olim positum erat in A?) **2** δὲ πέμπτον *A*: *in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina* δευτέρα *construit La.* **3** φαίνει *A*: φέρει *Ru, La.* **4** ὠφθείς *A*: ὤφθης *Ru, La.* **5** πρῶτας *A*: πρώτας *Ru, La.* **7** τὰ τεύχη χρηστοτάτου τέλους *A*: τετεύξῃ χρηστοτάτου τοῦ τέλους *Ru, La.* **8** τ᾽ ἐνωθεὶς *A*: θ᾽ ἑνωθεὶς *Ru, La.* **10** βραχὺ *A*: βραχεῖ *Ru, La.*

IV Cut

The cow is the fifth [in line] and the end of the bear-feeder.
Its shape shows its place and its character:

having come from there, you have shown yourself[1] to me as a friend,
since you possess the cardinal virtues[2] more than others do

and chasten your loved ones by being moderate.
Therefore you received a most worthy end[3],

as you alone were brought up from the glory of the palace[4]
and, O mightiest, left[5] the realms of the dead.
For you will enjoy the power for a short while[6].

[1] Read ὤφθης. [2] Read πρώτας γὰρ ἔχεις ἀρετάς: cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 355, 10. [3] Read ὅθεν τέτευχας χρηστοτάτου τοῦ τέλους; cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 355, 12. [4] For τ᾽ ἐνωθείς read τ᾽ ἀναχθείς; cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 355, 13. [5] Read λιπών. [6] Read βραχεῖ.

V μελισμὸς: /

† ἄλλη τὶς ἄρκτος, δευτέρα σκυμνοτρόφος· /
καὶ πάντοτ᾽ ἐκείνη πλὴν σκιὰ γραφουμ(έν)η: /

φύσιν χρόνων κίνησις ἐξημβομένη· /
εἰς ἐσχάτην γ(ὰρ) γράφεται τ(ῆς) ἐσχάτης: /

† παρήλια δὲ παρεκάτορα στέφει: /

† μερισμὸν ἐνφέρουσι τοῦ / κράτους ὅλου:

---

in locum oraculorum IV et V oracula VI et VII transferunt Ru, La (folium 4 ante folium 3 olim positum erat in A?) **2** ἄλλη τίς *A*: ἄλλη τις *La*. **3** πάντοτ᾽ ἐκείνη *A*: πᾶν, ὃ κείνη *Ru, La* | σκιὰ γραφουμένη *A*: σκιαγραφουμένη *Ru, La*. **4** ἐξημβομένη *A*: ἐξηπλωμένη *coni. Ru*. **6** παρεκάτορα *A*: πάρ᾽ ἑκάτερα *Ru*: πάρ᾽ ἑκατέρα *La*. **7** ἐνφέρουσι *A*: ἐμφέρουσα *Ru, La*.

V Dismemberment

[This is] another bear, a second cub-feeder;
they are alike in every way[1], but [the second] is a mere shadow[2] [of the first].

The natural movement of time is aborted[3],
for it is predestined [to take place] at the end of all time.

Crowns[4] encircling the sun at both sides[5]

bring about[6] a division of the whole state.

---

[1] For πάντοτ᾽ ἐκείνη read πᾶν ὃ κείνη. [2] For σκιὰ γραφουμένη read σκιαγραφουμένη. [3] For ἐξημβομένη read ἐξημβλωμένη. [4] Read στέφη. [5] For παρεκάτορα read παρ᾽ ἑκάτερα. [6] Read ἐμφέρουσι.

VI Ἔπαρσις: /

Ὅρα γοῦν πάλιν καὶ ξένον ὄντως τρόπον· /
δρέπανον καὶ ῥόδον ὅπερ φέρει: /

Τρίτον / δυσούμενον πρῶτ(ον) στοιχεῖον /
διέστησαν δὴ τὰ πάλαι συνηγμένα: /

δρεπανηφόρε τετράμηνόν / σοι γράφω·
πρωτόλια δὲ / πάντας ἀναλώτας ξίφει: /

Ναοὺς εἰδώλων πρὸς μικρὸν / ἀνεγείρεις·
τρεῖς τρεῖς (δὲ) ζήσας / ἐν βίῳ κύκλους γέρων·
ἤθη / πρὸς ἅδην, δύο λιπὼν ἐν / μέσω:

in locum oraculorum VI et VII oracula IV et V transferunt Ru, La (folium 3 post folium 4 olim positum erat in A?) **4** δυσούμενον *A*: δισσούμενον καί *Ru, La.* **7** ἀναλώτας *A*: ἀνάλωται *Ru, La* | πρωτόλια δὲ πάντας ἀναλώτας ξίφει *A*: πρωτόλεια δὲ παντ᾽ ἀνήλωται ξίφει *coni. Ru.* **8** ἀνεγείρεις *A*: ἀνεγερεῖς *Ru, La.* **9** τρεῖς τρεῖς *A*: τρὶς τρεῖς *Ru, La.* **10** ἤθη *A*: ἤχθη *Ru, La quorum La in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina et* ἴθι *construit* | ἅδην *A*: ἅδην *Ru La* | μέσω *A*: μέσῳ *Ru, La.*

VI Conceit

Now look once more at [this] truly peculiar character,
[represented by] the scythe and the rose he bears.

The third[1] [letter] when duplicated[2] is the first letter.
The things that were once united have separated.

Scythe-bearer, I give you four months
and then the choicest [will] all perish by the sword[3].

For a short while you [will] erect temples for idols.
Having lived three times three[4] lifecycles, old man[5],
go[6] to Hades[7], leaving two in the middle[8].

[1] For τρίτον read τρίτων δέ. [2] Read δισσούμενον. [3] Read this verse as πρωτόλεια δὲ πάντ᾽ ἀνάλωται ξίφει. [4] Read τρὶς τρεῖς. [5] Read γέρον. [6] Read ἴθι. [7] Read ἅδην. [8] Read μέσῳ. Cf. Niketas Choniates, p. 433, 89-92.

VII σύγχησις: /

Οὗτος πέλων τέταρτος ἐξ ἄρκτου τρέχων· /
ξίφος ῥόδον τ ἄν(θρωπ)ος ὁρμῶν εἰς θέρος: /

† ψυγήσεται πλὴν ὡς ῥόδον τεμων ῥόδον·
κύκλοις κϋνηθεὶς κ(αὶ) γὰρ τὸ τρῖτ(ον) /
στοιχεῖον ἡ χεὶρ, καὶ δρέπανον αὐτόγε: /

στοιχεῖον αὐτὸ πρῶτον / ἐκκόψει ῥόδον·
τὸ μῆ / τὸ στοιχεῖον τοῦτο βλέ / πε·
λαβὼν γ(ὰρ) ἀρχ(ὴν) / ὡς τέμνειν τὴν χλό.ν· /

οὐ φείσεταί σου παρ' ἀρχὴν / ὁ ἐμμένης·
ὅρα αὐτὸν ἀ / πάρχεται θερίζειν·
τὸ / ῥόδον φέρων ἐν πᾶσιν / ἔχει τέλος·
ἐν ᾧ τολοιπ(ὸν) / εὐθύμησον ὡς μάτην:

in locum oraculorum VI et VII oracula IV et V transferunt Ru, La (folium 3 post folium 4 olim positum erat in A?) **1** σύγχησις *A*: σύγχυσις *Ru, La.* **3** τ ἄνθρωπος *A*: τ' ἄνθρωπος *Ru, La.* **4** ψυγήσεται *A*: ψυχήσεται *Ru, La* | τεμων *A*: τεμόν *Ru, La.* **5** κϋνηθεὶς *A*: κινηθείς *Ru, La* | τὸ τρῖτον *A*: τὸ τρίτον φέρει *Ru, La.* **8** μῆ *A*: μῆ *Ru, La.* | τὸ μῆ τὸ στοιχεῖον τοῦτο βλέπε *A*: τομὴν δὲ τοῦ στοιχείου τούτου πρόσβλεπε *coni. Ru.* **9** ὡς *A*: ὥστε *Ru, La* | χλό.ν *(partem* η *seu* υ *litterae figura velat) A*: χλόην *Ru, La.* **10** φείσεταί σου *A*: φείσεται σοῦ *Ru* | ἐμμένης *A*: ἐμμενής *Ru, La.* **11** ἀπάρχεται θερίζειν *A*: θερίζειν γάρ ἀπάρχεται *Ru, La.* **13** τολοιπόν *A*: τὸ λοιπόν *La.*

VII Confusion[1]

Here is the fourth [symbol] running from the bear,
a sword, a rose and a man who hurries to bring in the harvest.

However, he will wither like a rose, having cut off a rose,
moved[2] by the cycle [of nature]. For the third
letter is the hand and exactly that is the scythe.

That first letter will cut off a rose:
see, [it is] the M[3], that letter;
for, having assumed power to cut young verdure[4],

he will not spare you, you who remain true[5] to [imperial] power.
Look at him, he starts harvesting:
carrying a rose, he has the power among all [people].
In this respect cheer up, though, for it is to no avail.

[1] Read σύγχυσις. [2] Read κινηθείς. [3] Read μῦ; τὸ μῦ ≈ τομή = "cut". [4] Read χλόην. [5] For ὁ ἐμμένης read ὃς ἐμμένεις.

VIII αἷμα: /

† αἳ αἳ τάλαινα τληπαθεστάτη πόλις·
οἰκτρὸν γὰρ οἰκτρὸν ἴν ἐπωφθήση φάος· /
ἦμος κρατήση πρὸς μακρὸν κάππα χρόν(ον)·
σφαγαὶ γ(ὰρ) ἐν σοὶ κ(αὶ) προχύσεις αἱμάτ(ων): /

Τῆς ἑνδεκάτης εἰργμένης οὐκ ἐκλήψει. /
καὶ πέντε πρωτόλια τ(ῆς) μοναρχίας· /
δράκοντα συρίξουσι τὸν λιβυκτόνον. /
ἀσάρκου μὴ στύλουσα τὰ τούτου μέλη: /

καὶ πρὸς μάχην ἔνφυλον / ὀργιωμένη·
νήριθμον ἐσμ(όν) / ταραχίσουσι τὰ ξίφει·
πρὸ(ς) / χιλιάδας ἐξ ἑπτὰ μετρου / μένας: /

καὶ πᾶς ἀσελγὴς κ(αὶ) φόν(ων) / κεχραμένος·
μίχος ἄρ / παξ ἄδικος ἀρρενο – / φθόρος·
τὰ λήστια λεύσου / σι προυμάτων φάος:

3 ἴν ἐπωφθήση *A*: νῦν ὑποφθήση *Ru, La*. **4** κρατήση *A*: κρατήσει *Ru, La*. **6** τῆς ἑνδεκάτης εἰργμένης οὐκ ἐκλήψει *A*: τῆς ἑνδεκάτης εἰργμένης οὐκ ἐκλείψει *Ru, La*: τῆς ἑνδεκάτης εἰρμὸς οὐκ ἄν ἐκλείψαι *coni. Ru*. **7** πρωτόλια *A*: πρωτόλεια *Ru, La*. **9** ἀσάρκου μὴ στύλουσα *A*: ἄσαρκα μυστίλλουσα *Ru, La* | μὴ στύλουσα *A*: μιστύλλοντα *coni. Ru*. **10** ἔνφυλον ὀργιωμένη *A*: ἔμφυλων ὠργιωμένοι *Ru*: ἔμφυλον ὠργνωμένοι *La*. **11** ταραχίσουσι τὰ ξίφει *A*: ταρχύσουσι τῷ ξίφει *Ru, La*. **12** ἐξ *A*: ἔξ *Ru, La*. **13** φόνων κεχραμένος *A*: φόνῳ κεχραμμένος *Ru, La*. **14** μίχος *A*: μοιχός *Ru, La*. **15** τὰ λήστια *A*: τὰ λοίσθια *Ru, La* | λεύσουσι *A*: λεύσσουσι *Ru, La* | προυμάτων *A*: προὐμμάτων *Ru, La*.

VIII Blood

Oh, wretched [and] woeful city,
for pitiful, pitiful will that day be[1] for your eyes,
when Kappa will have reigned[2] for a long time:
for blood and murder [will there be] within you.

When the eleventh <...> has been shut in[3], it will not come to an end[4]
and the five choicest[5] of the empire
will break[6] the monster that killed the south-westerly wind,
cutting to pieces[7] the limbs of that bag of bones.

And launching[8] into a civil[9] war,
they will stir up[10] a countless swarm[11] with their swords[12],
around six[13], seven thousand in number.

And those who are licentious and have blood-stained[14] hands,
the adulterers[15], robbers, unjust ones and sodomites,
they will all see before their eyes[16] the light of day for the last time[17].

[1] Cf. Lycophron, *Alexandra*, v. 304; for ἴν ἐπωφθήση read ἴν' ἐποφθῇ σοι. [2] Read κρατήσῃ or κρατήσει. [3] The Greek text of this verse is questionable and so is the translation. [4] Read ἐκλείψει. [5] Read πρωτόλεια. [6] Read συρρήξουσι. [7] For μὴ στύλουσα read μιστύλλοντα; cf. *Alexandra*, v. 154, where ἄσαρκα is written instead of ἀσάρκου; if we follow *Alexandra*, the meaning here is: "cutting its limbs fleshless". [8] Read ὠργιωμένοι. [9] Read ἔμφυλον. [10] For ταραχίσουσι read ταράξουσι. [11] Read ἐσμόν. Cf. *Alexandra*, v. 415. [12] For τὰ ξίφει read τῷ ξίφει. [13] Read ἕξ. [14] For φόνων κεχραμένος read φόνῳ κεχραμμένος. [15] Read μοιχός. [16] Read προὐμμάτων. [17] Read τὰ λοίσθια; cf. *Alexandra*, vv. 81-82: ... τοὶ δὲ λοισθίαν / νήχοντο μοῖραν προὐμμάτων δεδορκότες. So, instead of τὰ λοίσθια, one could also read τὸ λοίσθιον: "they will all see their final day before their eyes".

IX εὐχαριστεία: /

Τὴν ἀλοπεκὴν ὑποκριθεὶς φιλίαν,
καὶ μακροθύμως τ(ὴν) φρένα χαλινώσας· /
ὡς ἄγαν πρέσβυς καὶ πολιὸς ἐχέφρων,
ἐλθὼν δὲ δὶσσῶς τὰς νήσους ἑπτα – / ταύλως·
τοὺς ὅλους ἀφεὶς συνθλασθέντας ἀλλήλους: – /

τῶν δύο δερνόντ(ων) ὁ τρίτος ᾶος· /

καὶ προχύσεις φεῦ αἱμάτων ἐκχυθέντων,
σὺ τ(ῆς) νίκης ηπλω... / τὰς χεῖρας εὐχαρίστως·
καὶ βραβεῖον εἴληφας ἐν τῷ τέλει / τοῦ σκήπτρου: –

1 εὐχαριστεία *A*: εὐχαριστία *Ru, La.* **2** ἀλοπεκήν *A*: ἀλωπεκῆν *Ru*: ἀλωπεκήν *La.* **5** ἑπταταύλως *A*: ἑπταταύλους *Ru, La.* **6** ὅλους *A*: *in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina* ἄλλους *construit La* | ἀλλήλους *A*: ἀλλήλοις *Ru.* **7** *non est oraculi pars, sed figurae interpretatio* | τῶν δύο δερνόντων ὁ τρίτος ᾶος *A*: *omittit Ru*: τῶν δύο δερνόντων, ὁ τρίτος πρῶτος. Iᾶ *La; quae collocat post versum 10* **9** ηπλω... *(duo seu tres litteras figura velat) A*: ἤπλωσας *Ru, La.*

IX Gratitude[1]

You simulated the friendship of a fox[2]
and patiently bridled your impulses
like a very sensible grey-haired old man.
Twice you went to the islands of the seven tables[3],
leaving them all behind crushed by each other[4],

[[when two people scuffle, a third [will be] first[5]!]]

just as, alas, the streams of blood that flowed.
And then it was you who gratefully reached[6] for victory[7]
and finally received the prize: the sceptre.

[1] Read εὐχαριστία. [2] Read ἀλωπεκήν. [3] For ἑπταταύλως read ἑπτατάβλους. [4] For ἀλλήλους read ἀλλήλοις. [5] ᾶος = πρῶτος. [6] Read ἤπλωσας. [7] For τῆς νίκης read τῇ νίκῃ.

X ἐξουσία: /

Οὐαί σοι πόλις ἑπτάλοφε· ὅταν τὸ εἰκοστὸν
στοιχεῖον εὐφημίζεται εἰς τα τείχη σου· /
τότε ἤγγικεν ἡ πτῶσις ἢ ἡ ἀπώλεια
τῶν δυναστῶν σου, καὶ τῶν ἀδικία κρινόντ(ων): – /

ὃς ἔχει τοὺς δακτύλους αὐτοῦ δρεπανωτοὺς
ὅ ἐστι / δρέπανον τῆς ἐρημώσ(εω)ς· καὶ ἐν τῷ
ὑψίστῳ βλασφημήα:

K̃

2 οὐαί σοι *A*: οὐαὶ σοί *Ru* | τὸ εἰκοστόν *A*: εἰκοστόν *Ru*. **3** σου *A*: σοῦ *Ru, La*. **4** ἢ *A*: καί *Ru, La*. **5** σου *A*: σοῦ *Ru, La* | ἀδικία *A*: ἀδικίᾳ *Ru, La*. **6** αὐτοῦ *A*: αὐτοῦ *Ru, La*. **8** βλασφημήα *A*: βλασφημία *Ru, La*. **9** *omittunt Ru, La*.

X Power

Woe you, City of seven hills: when the twentieth
sign is acclaimed along your walls,
then your downfall is near, or the loss
of your rulers and of those who judge unfairly[1].

He who has fingers like scythes,
which is the scythe of devastation and
blasphemy[2] in [the eyes of] the Highest.

[[K]]

[1] Read ἀδικίᾳ. [2] Read βλασφημία.

XI ‹...›

Ιω̄ Ἰσαάκιος συγκοπὴν φόνου αἵματος /
Ιω̄ Ιω̄ εὐχαριστεία: /
Κω̄ καὶ κω̄ ἡ τοῦ πτωχοῦ ἐπικράτησις· /
π(ατ)ριάρχ· βλέπε δὲ σὺ ὁ τὰ θεῖα φρονῶν καὶ τὰ θεῖα φέρων ἐπ᾽ ὤμων· /
μή σου ἡ κόνις ὄνειδος γένηται· καὶ πώγονα βαθὺν ἐνδίκως /
καρήσ(η)· καὶ μεγάλως ἀχριωθήση αὐτὸς ὁ φονοσύμβουλος ἀρ – /
χιερεὺς· οὗ τὸ ὄνομα ἰω̄· καὶ ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἠλειμμ(έν)ος /
ἐπώνυμος, μεναχεὶμ: –

μοναρχία

1 *deest titulus in A*: Πατριάρχης *La (ex 5 translatum)*. **2** Ιω̄ *A*: Ιω *Ru*: Ιω̄ *La*. **3** Ιω̄ Ιω̄ *A*: Ιω. Ιω. *Ru*: Ιω̄. Ιω *La* | εὐχαριστεία *A*: εὐχαριστία *Ru, La*. **4** Κω̄ καὶ κω̄ *A*: Κω. Καὶ κω̄ *Ru*: Κω̄. Καὶ κω̄ *La*. **5** πατριάρχ. *A*: Πατριάρχης *Ru*. **6** μή σου *A*: μὴ σοῦ *Ru* | πώγονα *A*: πώγωνα *Ru, La*. **7** καρήση *A*: καρήσῃ *Ru* | ἀχριωθήση *A*: ἀγριωθήσῃ *Ru*: ἀγριωθήσῃ *La* | φονοσύμβουλος *A*: φόνου σύμβουλος *Ru, La*. **8** ἰω̄ *A*: Ιω *Ru, La*. **10** *figurae interpretatio est; omittunt Ru, La*.

XI <...>

Io(annes) Isaäkios interrupts[1] the bloodshed.
Io(annes) Io(annes) is gratitude[2].
Ko(nstantinos) [Of] Ko(nstantinos)[3] is the supremacy of the poor [emperor].
Patriarch You who mind the divine and who bear the divine [insignia] on your shoulders, see to it
that the dust will not disgrace you and that your full beard[4] will not rightly
be shaven off[5], and that you yourself will not be made utterly useless[6], you murder-inciting high
priest, whose name is Io(annes). And then the anointed one, named Menachim,
will be revealed.

[[monarchy]]

[1] For συγκοπήν read συγκοπή. [2] Read εὐχαριστία. [3] Read Κω(νσταντίν)ου. [4] Read πώγωνα. [5] Read καρήσει. [6] Read ἀχρειωθήσει.

XII εὐσέβεια: /

Τὴν πέτραν οἰκῶν ἄγε δεῦρο μοι ξένε·
θρήνους προλιπὼν καὶ βίον τ(ὸν) ἀγρότ(ην)· /
καὶ ζῆθ᾽ ὁ νεκρὸς, καὶ κατεστυγνασμένος: /

5 Συναγαγὼν κάλλιστα πάντα σκορπῖσας,
ἀδικί(ας) ἔπαθλον ἠνομημένον· /
ὅταν δ᾽ ὁ μείζων ἀστὴρ ὠφθήσ(η) μέλας,
γυμνὸς πάλιν ὄδευσον εἰς γῆς πυθμ(έν)α: –

7 ὠφθήση *A*: ὀφθήσει *Ru, La*. **8** ὄδευσον *A*: ὅδευσον *Ru, La* | πυθμένα *A*: πυθμένας *Ru, La*.

XII Piety

You who inhabit the rock, come to me, stranger,
leaving behind your lamentations and the rural life[1].
May you live, you, the dead one with the deeply sad face.

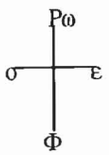
5 After bringing all the best together, you will scatter[2]
the illegal trophy of injustice,
but when the biggest star will appear[3] black to you,
then go back[4] naked deep into the bowels of the earth.

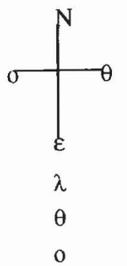
[1] For τὸν ἀγρότην read τοῦ ἀγρότου. [2] For σκορπίσας read σκορπίσεις. [3] Read ὀφθῇ σοι.
[4] Read ὄδευσον.

XIII εὐσέβεια: /

† ὁ νεκρὸς ἤδη καὶ θέα λελησμένος·
οἴδασι πολλοὶ κἂν μηδεὶς τοῦτον / βλέπει·
ὡς ἐκ μέθης δὲ φανεὶς ἀθρόως·
σκῆπτρα κρατήσ(ει) τῆσδε / τῆς βασιλίδος·
στύλος γ(ὰρ) ὠφθεὶς, ἐν πόλῳ κεκλοσμένος: – /

κήρυξ ἀφανὴς τρεῖς ἀνακράξει μέγα·
ἄπιτε σπουδὴ πρὸ(ς) δυσμὰς ἑπτα – / λόφου·
εὕρητε δ' ἄνδρα οἰκέτην ἐμὸν φίλον,
ἄξατε τοῦτον εἰς βασιλεί(ους) / δόμους
μηνοκρανομίλυχον: /





πραῦν ὑψήνουν
τὸ μέλλον ὀξύτατον εἰδέναι / μᾶλλον·
(καὶ) πάλιν ἔξεις ἑπτάλοφε τὸ κράτος:

N σ ο μ τ κ ζ ε ι Α

λ θ ο

Cruces, litterae solutae desunt in Ru; pro o *in parte sinistra utriusque crucis* σ *legit La.* **1** εὐσέβεια *A*: εὐλάβεια *La.* **2** θέα A: θέᾳ *Ru, La* | λελησμένος *A*: *in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina* λελυμένος *construit La.* **3** κἂν *A*: κᾶν *Ru, La* | βλέπει *A*: βλέπῃ *Ru, La.* **5** τῆσδε *A*: τῆς δέ *Ru, La.* **6** κεκλοσμένος *A*: κεκλωσμένος *Ru, La.* **7** τρεῖς *A*: τρίς *Ru, La.* **8** σπουδή *A*: σπουδῇ *Ru, La.* **10** βασιλείους *A*: βασιλείας *Ru, La.* **11** μηνοκρανομίλυχον *A*: μηνόκρανον, μείλιχον *Ru, La* | ὑψήνουν *A*: ὑψίνουν *Ru, La.*

XIII Piety[1]

He is dead in appearance[2] and hidden from sight[3].
Many people know him, although no one sees[4] him.
Suddenly emerged as if from an intoxication,
he will obtain the sceptre of this imperial city.
For when a column predestined[5] by fate will be seen[6] in the sky,
an invisible messenger will call thrice[7] in a loud voice:
hasten[8] to the western part of the City of seven hills,
and there you will find a man, [who is] my beloved servant.
Lead him to the imperial palace,
him whose skull is shaped like a half moon[9], who is friendly,
mild, high-minded[10],
very quick at knowing the future.
And once again, O City of seven hills, you will obtain the power.

[1] The meaning of the letters at the ends of the arms of both crosses is not certain. Some of us think that these letters form the words ἐφορῶ θεὸν ἑλθό(ντα), while others, reading a σ instead of an o at the left side of both crosses and seeing the letter τ at the intersection of the first cross, prefer to read the words στέφ(ος) Ῥω(μαίων) σθέν(ος) ἑλθό(ντος). The ten letters at the right side of the page are a complete mystery to us. [2] Read εἴδει. [3] Read θέᾳ. [4] Read βλέπῃ. [5] Read κεκλωσμένος. [6] Read ὀφθείς. [7] Read τρίς. [8] Read σπουδῇ. [9] Read μηνόκρανον, μείλιχον; an other possible translation is: "him who is wearing a helmet shaped like a half moon"; see the illuminations on fols. 7v, 8v and 9r that clearly show such a 'helmet'. [10] Read ὑψίνουν.

XIV προτίμησις: /

Ἰδοὺ πάλιν ἄν(θρωπ)ος ἐκ πρώτου γένους·
κρυβέντος εἰς γῆν τρισαναρίθμους / κύκλους·
γυμνὸς πρόεισιν ἐκ πέτρας ἀνηλίου·
καὶ δευτέρου λάμ – / ποντος ἄρχεται βίου·
εἰκὼν πάλιν ζώϊας ἀληθεστάτης: /

ζ̄ εὐλάβεια /

πλὴν ἀρτιάκης ἀρτίων διπλου / μένων·
τ(ὸν) ἥλιον ἄπεισι νεκρὸ(ς) / τ(ὴν) πέτραν: /

Σ

6 πάλιν ζώϊας *A*: παλινζωΐας *Ru*: παλιζωΐας *La*. 7 *figurae interpretatio est; omittunt Ru, La.* 8 ἀρτιάκης *A*: ἀρτιάκις *Ru, La*. 9 τὸν ἥλιον ἄπεισι *A*: τῶν ἡλίων ὕπεισι *Ru, La*. 10 *omittunt Ru, La.*

XIV Preference

See, once again a man from the first race
which was hidden in the earth during thrice-innumerable cycles,
emerges naked from a sunless rock
and starts a second life in full light,
an image of a most genuine revival[1].

[[z piety]]

When the even number of suns[2] doubles
an even number of times[3], he will return[4] dead into the rock.

[[S]]

[1] Read παλινζωΐας. [2] Read τῶν ἡλίων. [3] Read ἀρτιάκις. [4] For ἄπεισι read ὕπεισι.

XV προχείρησις: /
δέξαι τὸ δῶρον μὴ κατώκνη μοι γέρων·
ἀλλὰ λαβὼν κράτιστε τοῦ τέλους ἔχου· /
καὶ πρὸς καλὸν εὔθυνε τ(ὴν) σκηπτουχίαν·
τ' ἄλλα τε πάντα μὴ δεδεικὼς τ(ὸν) χρόν(ον)· /
καὶ γ(ὰρ) ἄνωθ(εν) τοῦτον εἴληφας μόνον·
τριτταῖς (δὲ) παγαῖς ἐγγυκλουμένου χρόνου· /
μἵᾶς δεκάδος, ἀστέρος πληρουμένου·
καλῶς τελεύτα τῷ καθιερουμένῳ· /
τὶ δὲ τεθηπῶς ἀγγελείαν εἰσδέχῃ·
ἄφες ἄριστε τὴν φυτοῦ κατοικίαν· /
ἕπου καλοῦντϊ πρὸς προκειμένην δόξαν·
καλῶς δ' ἀνύσας τὴν ἐν – / ἀρχαῖς ἡμέραν·
καλοῦ τέλους ἔμπλησον ἅπασαν κτίσιν·
καὶ πρὸς / μονὰς ὅδευε τὰς οὐ(ρα)νίους·
ἐν σοὶ γ(ὰρ) ἀρχὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ τέλος: †

1 προχείρησις *A*: προχείρισις *Ru, La*. **2** κατώκνη *A*: κατόκνει *Ru, La*. **5** τ' ἄλλα τε *A*: τἄλλά τε *Ru*: τ' ἄλλά τε *La* | δεδεικώς *A*: δεδοικώς *Ru, La*. **6** εἴληφας *A*: εἴληχας *Ru, La*. **7** ἐγγυκλουμένου *A*: ἐγκυκλουμένου *Ru, La*. **9** καθιερουμένῳ *A*: καθιερωμένῳ *Ru, La*. **10** τεθηπῶς *A*: τεθηπώς *Ru, La* | ἀγγελείαν *A*: ἀγγελίαν *Ru, La* | εἰσδέχῃ *A*: εἰσδέχῃ *Ru*. **13** ἀνύσας: υ *scriba ex ει correxit*. **15** ὅδευε *A*: ὅδευε *Ru, La*. **16** ἀρχήν *A*: ἀρχή *Ru, La*.

XV Appointment[1]

Accept the gift, do not hesitate[2], old man[3],
but after taking it, O mightiest, hold on to power
and lead your rule and all the rest to the good,
without fearing[4] time,
for you alone[5] have received this from above.
While the time of a decade revolves[6]
within three ellipses[7] and the star is waxing,
then end in a good way for the initiate[8].
Why then do you accept[9] the message[10] in amazement?
Leave, O excellent one, the dwelling of the plant,
follow him who calls upon you to the glory that awaits you
and when you have completed the day of the beginning in a good way,
then bring the whole creation to a good end[11]
and travel[12] to the heavenly abodes,
for in you is the beginning[13] and the end of all good[14].

[1] Read προχείρισις. [2] Read κατόκνει. [3] Read γέρον. [4] Read δεδοικώς. [5] For μόνον read μόνος. [6] Read ἐγκυκλουμένου. [7] Read πάγαις. [8] The Greek text may be corrupt. If one reads νῷ for τῷ, the translation is: "then end in a good way with a sanctified mind". [9] Read εἰσδέχει. [10] Read ἀγγελίαν. [11] If the meaning of ἀρχαῖς here is "power", the translation is: "and when you have completed the day you wield the power in a good way", and if the meaning of τέλους is "rulership", the translation is: "then fill the whole creation with good rulership". [12] Read ὅδευε. [13] For ἀρχήν read ἀρχή. [14] See *Rev.* 21, 5-6, where we read about the new heaven and earth and about the new Jerusalem: καὶ εἶπεν ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ· ἰδού, καινὰ ποιῶ πάντα. ... καὶ εἶπέν μοι· γέγοναν· ἐγώ [εἰμι] τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος.

XVI ‹...›

καλοῦ βίου τέτευχας ἐξ ἀδοξΐ(ας)·
Π ἐξ ἀρετὴς δ᾽ ἔσχηκας, εὐτυχεῖς / πλέον· Π
ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ὅλως ἄριστε κερδανεῖς χάριν: /

5 φθόνος φθάσας γ(ὰρ), προκρίνει σοι τ(ὴν) βλάβην·
οὐκ ἀστυχήσεις τ(ῆ)ς ἄνω / κληρουχίας:

1 *deest titulus in A*: Π.Π. *La (ex 3 translatum).* **2-6** *oraculo quod* προχείρισις *inscribitur (oraculum XV) attribuit Ru.* **3** *litterae* Π...Π *desunt in Ru* | εὐτυχεῖς *A*: ἢ τύχης *prop. La post Dousam conicientem, teste Ru.* **4** οὐδ᾽ ὅλως *A*: *in annotationibus ex antiqua versione Latina* ἀδόλως *construit La.* **5** προκρίνει *A*: προκρινεῖ *Ru, La* | σοι *A*: σοί *Ru. La.*

XVI <...>

A noble life you have gained, starting from obscurity,
[P] and you got this on account of your virtue rather than by good luck[1]. [P]
But by no means, O excellent one, will you reap gratitude,

5 for envy will come earlier and mete out[2] harm to you.
You will [however] not fail to obtain the inheritance of heaven.

[1] For εὐτυχεῖς read ἢ τύχης. [2] For προκρίνει read προκρινεῖ.

Περὶ τοῦ θρηλλουμένου πτωχοῦ καὶ ἐκλεκτοῦ βασιλέως· τοῦ γνωστοῦ,
καὶ ἀγνώστου· τοῦ κατοικοῦντος ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἄκρα τῆς βυζαντίδος·
ὁ ἀληθινὸς βασιλεὺς, ὃς κατοικεῖ ἐν ὑγρῷ τόπῳ διὰ τὸ καυστικὸν· ὃν
ἐδίωξαν τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ οἱ ἄν(θρωπ)οι, καὶ δεδώκασι τὴν στρωμνὴν αὐτοῦ
ἐν ταῖς νήσοις· πλέοντος καὶ ἁλιεύοντος ἑυδοματικῷ ἑυδόμῳ
χρόνῳ· εἰς τὸ τέλος τῶν ἰσμαηλιτῶν ἀποκαλυφθήσεται· παρα
κολουθήσει δὲ οὗτος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ λιβὸς· καὶ ἔσται ὁ πρῶτος
δεύτερος· καὶ ὁ δεύτερος πρῶτος· (καὶ) μετὰ τοῦτο ποιεῖν τὰ φονευ –
τήρια ἐν μέσῳ τῆς πόλεως, ἐν τῷ λεοφόρῳ πλακοτῷ· ἐν ἡμέρα
παρασκευῇ, ὥρα τρίτη τῆς ἡμέρας· καὶ τριῶν ταραττομένων
ὁ τρίτος πρῶτος· καὶ ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ εἰλημένος· ὁ μέλλων
ἀποκαλυφθῆναι διὰ τόξων καὶ σημείων κ(υρίο)υ φανήσεται· ἐνηχη –
θῇ παρὰ τοῦ ὡρωμένου ἀγγέλου τῷ ἀποκαλυφθέντι ὡς ἀν(θρώπ)ῳ
λευκοφόρῳ εὐνούχῳ· καὶ εἰς τὸ οὖς αὐτοῦ εἴπῃ αὐτοῦ καθεύ
δοντος· καὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς αὐτοῦ λαβόμενος εἴπῃ· ἔγειρε ὁ καθεύ
δων καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου, καὶ ἐπιφαύσει σοι ὁ χ(ριστὸ)ς· προσκα
λεῖται γάρ σε τοῦ ποιμαίνειν λαὸν περιούσιον· καὶ ἐκ δευτέρου αὐτῷ
εἴπῃ· ἔξελθε ὁ κεκρυμένος μηκέτι κρύπτου, πολλοί σε ζητοῦσι·
πάντες ἐξελεύσονται, σὺ (δὲ) μόνος εἰσελεύσει· καὶ ἐκ τρίτου δώσει
αὐτῷ πλάκας λιθίνας, ἐν αἷς ἐγκεχάρακται ἐντολαὶ δύο· ἐκδι
κῆσαι καὶ ἐθνηποιῆσαι χρηστὰ· καὶ ἀσέβειαν ἐκδιῶξαι καὶ τ(οὺς)
τὰ σοδομητικὰ ἔργα ποιοῦντας, πυρικαύστους ποιῆσαι· ὡσαύτως
καὶ τοὺς κακοὺς ἱερεῖς, ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ διώξαι· καὶ τοὺς ἀξίους εἰς τὸ
θεῖον ἀποκαταστῆσαι, εἰς εὐαρέστησιν τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ τοῦ οὐ(ρα)νοῦ καὶ τῆς γ(ῆ)ς·
ἔχει (δὲ) οὗτος σημεῖα· ὁ ὄνυξ τοῦ μεγάλου δακτύλου τοῦ δεξιοῦ ποδὸς,
τήλομα ἔχων· ἡ λαλιὰ αὐτοῦ ἡδεῖα· ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ εὐηδὴς· τὸ
εἶδος αὐτοῦ γυναικεῖον· μέσος τὴν ἡλικίαν· φαλακρὸς· μικρὸν

1 θρηλλουμένου *A*: θρυλλουμένου *La*. **2** ἄκρα *A*: ἄκρᾳ *La* | βυζαντίδος *A*: βυσαντίδος *La*. **5** ἑυδοματικῷ *A*: ἑβδοματικῷ *La* | ἑυδόμῳ *A*: ἑβδόμα *La*. **8** καὶ *A*: τί *La*. **9** ἡμέρα *A*: ἡμέρᾳ *La*. **11** εἰλημένος *A*: ἡλειμμένος *La*. **12/13** ἐνηχηθῆ *A*: ἐνηχήσθη *La qui in annotationibus* ἐνηχήθη *scribit*. **13/14** τῷ ἀποκαλυφθέντι ὡς ἀνθρώπῳ λευκοφόρῳ εὐνούχῳ *A*: τοῦ ἀποκαλυφθέντος ὡς ἀνθρώπου λευκοφόρου εὐνούχου *La*. **14** εἴπῃ *A*: εἴπῃ *La*. **15** εἴπῃ *A*: εἴπῃ *La*. **17/18** αὐτω εἴπῃ *A*: αὐτῷ εἴπῃ *La*. **18** κεκρυμένος *A*: κεκρυμμένος *La* | κρύπτου *A*: κρυπτοῦ *La* | πολλοὶ σε *A*: πόλλοι σε *La*. **20** αὐτω *A*: αὐτῷ *La* | πλάκας *A*: πλᾶκας *La*. **20/21** ἐκδικῆσαι *A*: ἐκδικήσαι *La*. **22** ὡσαύτως *A*: ὁσαύτως *La*.

About the famous[1], poor and chosen emperor, known
and unknown, who lives in the first citadel[2] of Byzantion.
The true emperor, who lives in a moist place because of the burning heat,
whom people drove away from his residence and whom they lodged
on the islands, where he is sailing and fishing in the seventh year-
week[3], will be revealed at the end of the [dominion of the] Ismaelites. He
will succeed [them] in the days of the south-westerly wind and [then] the first will
be second, and the second first. And after that, places of execution [will be]
prepared[4] in the middle of the city, on the crowded Plakoton[5], on a
Friday[6], at the third hour[7] of the day. When three men are in an uproar,
the third [will be] first. And the anointed one[8] will be revealed. The one who will be
revealed, will become manifest by means of rainbows and signs of the Lord. He will
be instructed[9] by an angel who presents himself to the revealed one in human form
[like] a eunuch wearing white[10], and who will speak[11] into his ear while he is
asleep. And taking his right hand, he will say[12]: "Awake, you who
sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light[13]; for he appeals
to you to tend his chosen people". And the second time he will say to him[14]:
"Come out, you who are hidden[15], hide no more, many people are looking for you.
All of them will go out, you alone will go in". And the third time he will give
him[16] stone tables, in which two commandments have been carved: to punish
the gentiles and make them righteous[17], and to persecute impiety and
burn to death those who are doing the things of Sodom[18], and, likewise,
to drive away the wicked priests from the temple and restore the
worthy ones to holy [office], as it pleases the God of Heaven and Earth.
His identifying marks are as follows[19]: the nail of the big toe of his right foot
shows a knob[20], his conversation is pleasant, his face is well-shaped[21] and his
appearance is feminine. He is middle-aged, bald on the crown and slightly

[1] Read θρυλλουμένου. [2] Read ἄκρᾳ. [3] Read ἑβδοματικῷ ἑβδόμῳ. [4] For ποιεῖν τὰ read ποιεῖται [5] I.e. the Forum of Constantine; see Janin, *Constantinople*, pp. 63 and 413. [6] Read ἡμέρᾳ. [7] Read ὥρᾳ τρίτῃ. [8] Read ἠλειμμένος. [9] Read ἐνηχηθῇ. [10] For ἀνθρώπῳ λευκοφόρῳ εὐνούχῳ read ἀνθρώπου λευκοφόρου εὐνούχου. [11] Read εἴπῃ. [12] Read εἴπῃ. [13] Cf. *Ep. Eph.* 5, 14. [14] Read αὐτῷ εἴπῃ. [15] Read κεκρυμμένος. [16] Read αὐτῷ. [17] Read ἔθνη ποιῆσαι. [18] Read σοδομιτικά. [19] For οὗτος σημεῖα read οὕτως τὰ σημεῖα. [20] Read τύλωμα or, if one prefers, τίτλωμα: "a tattoo". [21] Read εὐειδής.

πολιὸς· πολυήστωρ καὶ μᾶλλα εἶδος· προωρατικὸς καὶ προφητείας με
τέχων καὶ μεταδιδοὺς· ἡ ῥὶς αὐτοῦ ἐπικεκυφυῖα· οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ
μετέωροι· πένης κεκαρμένος· καὶ ῥάκια ἐνδεδυμένος, διὰ τὸ μὴ
χρησιμεύειν· ἔσται δὲ πραΰς καὶ φιλάν(θρωπ)ος· εὐμετάδοτος· με
γαλόψῡχος· φοβερὸς· γενναῖος· ἡ δεξιὰ αὐτοῦ ἁρμοὺς δύο, σειρὰς
καὶ σταυροὺς πορφυροῦς ἔχων ἐπὶ τοὺς δύο ὠμοπλάτας, ἐπὶ τοῦ
στήθους δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν αὐχένα αὐτόφιον· σειρὰς ἐπὶ τῶν πλευρῶν
καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ τραχήλου· καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μηρῶν καὶ βραχιόνων· τὸ δὲ ὄνο
μα τοῦ βασιλέως κεκρυμμένον ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι· ὁμοιεῖ δὲ τῇ ἑσχάτῃ
ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑυδόμῃ· γράφεται δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου γράμματος·
ἐν τῷ ὀκτωκαιδεκάτῳ· ἤτοι ἐν τῷ τριακοσιωστῷ πρώτῳ· φυ
λάττων θεοσέβειαν καὶ προφητείαν· ὃν ἐδόκουν οἱ ἄν(θρωπ)οι ὡς οὐ
δὲν ὄντα, καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν χρησιμεύοντα· ἐπιθήση κ(ύριο)ς τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ
ἐπὶ τὴν κορυφὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ χρίσει αὐτὸν ἔλαιον εἰς τὰ τέλη τῶν ἡμερ(ῶν)·
ὃς γραφήσεται ἠλειμμένος, καὶ ἐξελεύσεται κατὰ τῶν ἰσμαηλι
τῶν· καὶ κρατήση αὐτούς, ὅτι ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις θλιβή
σονται οἱ ἄν(θρωπ)οι καὶ δώσουσι τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς· καὶ
χοῦν πάσωσιν ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν· καὶ βοήσουσι πρὸς
κ(ύριο)ν τὸν θ(εὸ)ν τοῦ οὐ(ρα)νοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς· καὶ τότε εἰσακούσεται
κ(ύριο)ς τῆς δεή
σεως αὐτῶν· καὶ θήση τὰ ὦτα ἐπὶ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν γῆν·
καὶ ἀποστελεῖ τὸν ἀρχάγγελον αὐτοῦ ἐν σχήματι ἀν(θρώπ)ου, καὶ αὐλι
σθήσεται ἐν ταῖς νήσοις· καὶ εὑρήσει τὸν ἅγιον αὐτοῦ, τὸν εἰλημ –
μένον παρ' οὐδενὸς βλεπόμενον· (καὶ) παρὰ μηδενὸς γνωριζόμενον·
τὸν χρηστὸν καὶ ἄχρηστον· τὸν πτωχὸν καὶ μὴ ὑστερούμενον· τὸν
ἐλεοῦντα καὶ ἐλεούμενον· τὸν γυμνὸν καὶ βύσσινα ἠμφιεσμ(έν)ον·
τὸν νεκρὸν ὄντα τῷ σώματι, κ(αὶ) ἔνπνουν καὶ ζῶντα τῷ πν(εύματ)ι· ὁ
ἄρτιος καὶ κυλλὸς· ὁ προκατάρξας καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν χρησιμεύων·

28 μᾶλλα *A*: μᾶλλον *La* | εἶδος *A*: εἰδώς *La* | προωρατικός: ο *[1] ex ω [?] scriba correxit.* **29** *post* ὀφθαλμοί *scriba αὐτοῦ delevit.* **30** μή *A*: μέν *La.* **32** ἁρμούς *A*: ἅρμους *La.* **36** ἑσχάτη *A*: ἐσχάτῃ *La.* **37** ἑυδόμῃ *A*: ἑβδόμῃ *La.* **43** κρατήση *A*: κρατήσει *La.* **44** πρόσωπα *A*: πρώσοπα *La.* **46** εἰσακούσεται *A*: εἰσακούσηται *La.* **49/50** εἰλημμένον *A*: ἠλειμμένον *La.* **52** ἡμφιεσμένον *A*: ἐμφιεσμένον *La.* **53** ἔνπνουν *A*: εὔπνουν *La.*

grey-haired. He is very learned[1] and erudite[2]. He foresees the future[3], sharing in [the
gift of] prophecy in which he lets other people share. He has an aquiline nose and
protuberant eyes. He is poor, shaven and dressed in rags, because he is of no
use. He will be mild, kind, generous, magnanimous,
formidable and noble. His right hand [has] two joints, he bears cords
and purple crosses on his two shoulder blades, a
natural[4] <...> on his chest and neck, and cords on his sides,
his throat, his thighs and his arms. The name
of the emperor is hidden from the gentiles; it is similar[5] to the last[6]
day, the seventh[7], and it begins with the first letter
in the eighteenth, or the three hundred and first[8]. He observes
piety and prophecy. People considered him to be
nothing and useful for nothing. The Lord will place[9] his hand
on his head and will anoint him with oil[10] at the end of time.
He will be represented [as] anointed and will march out against the Ismaelites
and defeat[11] them. For in those times people will be
distressed, beat their heads against the ground, sprinkle
dust over their heads and cry aloud to the
Lord, the God of Heaven and Earth. Then the Lord will hear their prayer
and will turn[12] his ears to those who inhabit the earth.
He will send his archangel in human shape, who
will take up his abode on the islands and will find His holy man, the anointed[13],
whom nobody sees and nobody knows.
He is useful and useless, poor and not destitute,
merciful and dealt with mercifully, naked and clothed in linen,
dead in body, and alive[14] and well in spirit,
perfect and deformed, the first among the prophets[15] and useful for nothing,

[1] Read πολυΐστωρ. [2] Read μάλα εἰδώς. [3] Read προορατικός. [4] Read αὐτόφυον. [5] Read ὁμοιοῖ. [6] Read ἐσχάτῃ. [7] Read ἑβδόμῃ. [8] Read τριακοσιοστῷ. [9] Read ἐπιθήσει. [10] Cf. *Ep. Hebr.* 1, 9. [11] Read κρατήσει or κρατήσῃ. [12] Read θήσει. [13] Read ἠλειμμένον. [14] Read ἔμπνουν. [15] Read προφητάρξας, cf. lines 101-102.

ὁ ἀδαὴς καὶ πολλὰ εἰδὼς· ὁ τοῖς πᾶσι σκοτεινὸς καὶ ἀφανὴς·
τῷ δὲ θ(ε)ῷ καὶ ἑαυτῷ φανερὸς· ὁ ἐκ μοίρας δουκικῆς καὶ ἐκ γέ
νους βασιλικοῦ καταγόμενος· βασιλέως υἱὸς καὶ αὐτὸς βασι
λεὺς τῆς δόξης· κατοικῶν ἐν τῷ ἄκρω τῆς βυζαντίδος· ἀπὸ τ(ῆς)
δυτικῆς τῆς πόλεως πύλης πλησίον τοῦ σίγματος· αὐτοῦ ἡ ἀνα
τροφὴ ἐκ γένους ὀγδοήκοντα ψήφους ἔχων τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ· ἔστι (δὲ)
καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ δωδεκάτου στοιχείου· τὸ δὲ ἕτερον γράφεται ἀπὸ
τοῦ πρώτου γράμματος ἐν τῷ ὀκτωκαιδεκάτῳ· ἔσται δὲ ἀφ' ὁ –
μοιωμένος τῷ θ(ε)ῷ τῷ ὑψίστῳ· τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τοῦ π(ατ)ρ(ὸ)ς αὐτοῦ θεῖον· ὅς
ἐστιν ὑψίνους· ἔστι δὲ ἀπάτωρ· ἀμήτωρ· καὶ ἀγενεαλόγητος·
ἅμα δὲ καὶ τρικόνδηλος· ἐκ συνουσίας παῖδας ποιήσας· γὺ
ναῖκα μίαν· τοὺς μὲν ἄῤῥενας τὰς δὲ θηλυίας· καὶ ταῦτα τῶν
παίδων καὶ τῶν γυναικῶν τὰ ὀνόματα· ἅμα· μ̄ δ̄· γ̄· ᾱ·
ᾱ· ᾱ· ῑ· καὶ ἔσται δὲ δῆλα ταῦτα ἀπὸ τοῦ σημείου τοῦ ὄνυχος τοῦ
δεξιοῦ ποδὸς· καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ δεξιοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ αὐτοῦ· ὅς ἐστι στρε
βλὸς ὀφθαλμὸς τ(ῆς) πορνείας· καὶ ἅγιος τῷ κ(υρί)ῳ· ἐλαίας ἔχων
εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μέρη, εἵς τε τὸ ὑπομάζιον· καὶ μᾶλλον τοῦ ὠμο
πλάτου· ἐπί τε τοῦ μηροῦ καὶ τοῦ ὠτὸς· καὶ ἐπὶ τ(ὴν) δεξιὰν ὀφρὺν·
διὰ τὸ τῆς ἐλεημοσύνης μέτρον· ἐξερυθραίνων τὰς μήλας χαρί
εις· εὐμήκης τὸ γένειον μεσηλιωμένον, ἔχων τὴν ὑπήνην ἅμα
τῇ κρατ(ῖ), μίλλιχος· μελισταγὴς· μελάθριξ· ἀναφελανδὸς· γηραιὸ(ς)· η̄ η̄
νικητὴς· τροπαιοῦχος· ἄναξ ἀνάκτων· ἄριστος· κατοικῶν ο̄. ο̄.
ἐν τῇ τετραπύλῳ, ἐπὶ τὸ ψυχρότερον μέρος τοῦ σίγματος· καὶ
ἐν τῷ νοτιαίῳ μέρη τῆς θαλάσσης· καὶ ἐν τόπῳ ἀσήμῳ καὶ βορ
βορώδη· ἐξερχομένου ἐκ τῆς πύλης τῆς χρυσέας· καὶ τῆς ξυ
λοκέρκου· πάντα τὰ ἀντακάταντα, καταντὰ· νάγια ἠρεμεῖ·
τὸ δὲ σκήνωμα ἔχων ἠνωμένον ἐκ δύο ἔξω πυλῶν· ἡ δεξιὰ μ(ὲν)

58 ἄκρω *A*: ἄκρῳ *La* | βυζαντίδος *A*: βυσαντίδος *La*. **62** ὀκτωκαιδεκάτω *A*: ὄκτω καὶ δεκάτω *La*. **62/63** ἀφ' ὁμοιωμένος *A*: ἀφομοιωμένος *La*. **66** θηλυίας *A*: θηλείας *La*. **67/68** μ̄ δ̄· γ̄· ᾱ· ᾱ· ᾱ· ῑ· *A*: μ΄. δ΄. γ΄. α΄. α΄. α΄. ι΄. *La*. **68** δὲ δῆλα *A*: δέδηλα *La*. **75** κρατῖ *A*: κρα^{τ} *La* | μίλλιχος *A*: μείλιχος *La* | ἀναφελανδός *A*: ἀναφάλαντος *La*. **76** η̄ η̄ *A*: *omittit La*. **77** ο̄.ο̄. *A*: *omittit La*. **78** μέρη *A*: μέρει *La*. **78/79** βορβορώδη *A*: βορβορώδει *La*. **80** καταντά *A*: κατάντα *La* | νάγια *A*: νόγια *La* | ἠρεμεῖ *A*: κρεμεῖ *La*. **81** ἠνωμένον *A*: ἠνομένον *La* | ἔξω πυλῶν *A*: ἀξωπυλῶν *La*.

ignorant and learned, dark and invisible to all,
but visible to God and to himself. He is part of the Doukas family and descends
from an imperial dynasty, being the son of an emperor and being himself the
emperor of glory. He lives at the far end[1] of the city of Byzantion, towards
the western gate of the city and close to the Sigma. He grew up
in a family that has[2] a name [consisting of] eighty ciphers, which begins
with the twelfth letter; but his other [name] begins with
the first letter in the eighteenth[3]. He resembles[4]
God Almighty, and the name of his father is divine. His
thoughts are elevated. He is fatherless, motherless, and without ancestry.
He also has three-knuckled[5] fingers. He has children from intercourse [with]
one wife; some of them male and others female[6], and these are the names of the
boys and the females, namely, m, d, g, a,
a, a, i. These things will be evident from the mark on the nail of his
right foot and from his right eye, which is the squint-eyed
eye of fornication. He is holy in the sight of the Lord. He has birthmarks
on the right side [of his body], under his chest, and even more on his
shoulder, his thigh and his ear, and on his right eyebrow,
because of the extent of his mercy. He is lovely with blushing cheeks[7],
and tall. His beard, his moustache and [the hair on] his head are
streaked. He is kind[8], honey-sweet, black-haired[9] with a high forehead[10]. He is of age.
He is victorious, triumphant, king of kings, excellent. He lives
in the Tetrapylon, towards the coldest part of the Sigma and
at the southern seaside[11], and in an obscure and muddy[12] place.
When he comes out of the Golden Gate and the Xylokerkos
Gate, all things that are topsy-turvy come to an end[13] and the defilements cease[14].
His quarters lie in between the two outer [piers of the] gates. On the right

[1] Read ἄκρῳ. [2] For ἔχων read ἔχοντος. [3] Read ὀκτωκαιδεκάτῳ. [4] Read ἀφωμοιωμένος. [5] Read τρικόνδυλος. [6] Read θηλείας. [7] For τὰς μήλας read τὰ μῆλα. [8] Read μείλιχος. [9] For μελάθριξ read μελάνθριξ. [10] For ἀναφελανδός read ἀναφαλανδός. [11] Read μέρει. [12] Read βορβορώδει. [13] For πάντα τὰ ἀντακάταντα καταντά read πάντα τὰ ἀνάκατα καταντᾷ. [14] For νάγια read τὰ ἐνάγια.

πλατεῖα ὁδὸς καὶ λιθόστρωτος· ἔχουσα λίθους ξεστοὺς καὶ τετραδι –
αίους· ὀφιώδης κείμενος καὶ θηριόδης στύλος τέταρτος· καὶ δι
φρελάτης θηλυκῆ ἵσταται ἀπέναντι τῆς σκηνῆς αὐτοῦ· καὶ κρατεῖ
στέφανον κράζων τὴν τύχην τοῦ ἐκλεκτοῦ βασιλέως· ἀπέναντι τῆς σκη
νῆς αὐτοῦ, ἵδριμα θεανδρικὸν θυόμενον καὶ προσκυνούμενον ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.
ἔχων ζώνην μίαν· καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ γλυπτὸν· φέρων τε τὸν
πόλεμον καὶ τῶν ξανθῶν τὰς μηχανὰς· τὰς χύσεις τῶν αἱμάτ(ων)·
εἰς κυλίκιον ἐν τῇ γῆ ἐστρωμένον, ἔχων ἐπὶ τοῦ νώτου τὸν ἄρχοντα
τῶν θηρίων· καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ στήθους τὸν τοῦ στ(αυ)ροῦ τύπον· εὐωνύμου δὲ
μέρους τοῦ σκηνώματος αὐτοῦ ὁδὸς ἐστενομένη· ῥυμίσκη καὶ ὕδα
τος πλημμύρα καὶ βαθεῖα καὶ πλημμυροῦντα καὶ ἠχοῦντα
καὶ κυμαινόμενα ἐπὶ τ(ὴν) ἀκρότομον θάλασσαν τῆς ἑπταλόφου·
καὶ ποταμὸς βρυχόμενος ἀπὸ τῆς σϊδηρᾶς ἀκροτόμου ἀναδί –
δοται· ὃς ἐστὶν ἐλάτινος πεφυτευμένη ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ γεννήσει· ἔχων
παρακλόνους ἐπάνω αὐτῶν τῶν ἐλατίνων, καλιὰ ὀρνέου ἐπέ
χων λευκοῦ· ἔχων βλαστοὺς καὶ ἰδέας ὀρνέων καὶ περιστερῶν· ἐν ᾧ
καὶ πύργος μέγιστος, καὶ θηριώδης στύχη· διακονούμενος ὑπὸ με
λανδίτου· ἐλεῶν τε καὶ ἐλεούμενος· ἔστι δὲ δυσώνυμος ἡ κλῆ
σις αὐτοῦ θηριόνυμος λύκος· καὶ αὐτῇ τῇ τάξει πέφυκεν ἡλού
στριος· φυλάττειν πᾶσαν θεοσέβειαν καὶ προφητείαν· ὁ προφη –
τάρξας, καὶ εἰς μηδὲν χρησϊμεύσας· ὃν ἐξουθένουν οἱ ἄν(θρωπ)οι
ὡς νεκρὸν ὄντα, καὶ μηδὲν χρησϊμεύοντα· ἀποκαλύψη ὁ θ(εὸ)ς
καὶ ἐνφανίση καὶ χρίσει αὐτὸν ἔλαιον εἰς τὰ τέλ(η) τῶν ἡμερῶν·
ὃς ἐστὶν ἠλειμμένος ἀπὸ γαστρὸς ἐλαίου ἁγίου αὐτοῦ· ἀποκαλυ
φθήσεται δὲ ουτ...· φανήσεται ἀστὴρ ἡμέρας τρεῖς· καὶ νυκτὸς
ὥρας γ΄ μέσον τῆς πόλεως ἕως τῆς μ(ητ)ρ(ὸ)ς τοῦ ὑψίστου· ὁ (δὲ) ἀστὴρ
οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τ(ῶν)
πλανήτων, ἀλλ' ἢ ὡς ἐφαίνει εἰς τ(ὴν) σ(ωτή)ριον γέννησιν τοῦ χ(ριστο)ῦ·
καὶ κήρυξ βοῶν

82 ξεστούς *A*: ξεφύς *La*. **83** θηριόδης *A*: θηριώδης *La*. **83/84** διφρελάτης *A*: διφρολάτης *La*. **84** θηλυκῆ A: θηλυκή *La*. **86** ἵδριμα *A*: ἵδρυμα *La*. **89** γῆ *A*: γῇ *La* | νώτου *A*: νότου *La*. **90** σταυροῦ *A*: στρατοῦ *La* | εὐωνύμου *A*: εὐονύμου *La*. **95** ὃς ἐστίν *A*: ὅς ἐστιν *La* | πεφυτευμένη *A*: πεφυταμένη *La*. **97** λευκοῦ *A*: λαμοῦ *La*. **98** μέγιστος *A*: μάλιστος *La*. **99** ἔστι *A*: ἐστί *La*. **99/100** ἡ κλῆσις *A*: κήλησις *La*. **100** αὐτῇ *A*: αὐτῇ *La*. **101/102** ὁ προφητάρξας *A*: οὐ προφητάρξας *La*. **103** ἀποκαλύψη *A*: ἀποκαλύψει *La*. **104** ἐνφανίση *A*: ἐμφανίζει *La*. **106** ουτ... *(spatium duo seu trium litterarum vacat) A*: οὕτως *La*.

there is a wide, paved road with polished, square stones.
The fourth column is snake-like and beast-like[1]. A
female charioteer stands before his tabernacle and holds
a crown, loudly acclaiming the fortune of the chosen emperor. Before his tabernacle
there is a shrine[2] of the God-man, where he brings offerings and shows his reverence.
It has[3] one frieze [on which] his name is carved: he brings the
war, the devices of the blond [peoples] and the sheddings of blood
in a cup toppled over on the ground[4], and on his back he has the lord
of the beasts and on his chest the sign of the cross. On the left
side of his quarters there is a narrow[5] road, an alley
flooded with water and deep. [The waters] are flooding and roaring
and billowing towards the steep sea[side] of the City of seven hills
and a raging[6] river rushes down the iron cliff.
There[7] is a fir tree[8] which was planted at the moment of his birth. It has[9]
side-branches[10] above its fir-tree [branches], which hold[11] the nest[12] of a
white bird, and it has[13] sprouts and [various] kinds[14] of birds and doves. At this spot
there is a mighty tower, and beast-like walls[15]. He is ministered by a
man wearing black[16]. He is merciful and is dealt with mercifully. His ill-omened
name is a beast-named[17] wolf. He is illustrious[18] among his own[19] class.
He observes piety and prophecy in all respects. He is the first among the
prophets, but he is useful for nothing. And the people despised him
as if he were dead, and useful for nothing. God will reveal[20] him
and will show[21] him and will anoint him with oil at the end of time –
and he is anointed from his belly [upward] with holy oil[22]. He will be
revealed as follows: a star will appear for three days, and at night
for three hours, throughout the city as far as [the church of] the Mother of the
Highest. The star is not one of the
planets, but it is as it appeared[23] at the redemptive birth of Christ. A herald will
shout

[1] Read θηριώδης. [2] Read ἵδρυμα. [3] Read ἔχον. [4] Read γῇ. [5] Read ἐστενωμένη. [6] Read βρυχώμενος. [7] For ὅς read οὗ or ἐν ᾧ. [8] For ἐλάτινος read ἐλάτη. [9] For ἔχων read ἔχουσα. [10] Read παρακλώνους. [11] For ἐπέχων read ἐπέχοντας. [12] For καλιά read καλιάν. [13] For ἔχων read ἔχουσα. [14] Read ἰδέας. [15] For θηριώδης στύχη read θηριώδεις τοῖχοι. [16] Read μελανδύτου. [17] Read θηριώνυμος. [18] Read ἰλλούστριος. [19] Read αὐτῇ. [20] Read ἀποκαλύψει or ἀποκαλύψῃ. [21] Read ἐμφανίσει or ἐμφανίσῃ. [22] For ἐλαίου ἁγίου read ἐλαίῳ ἁγίῳ. [23] For ἐφαίνει read ἐφάνη.

τρανῶς· ἐν ταῖς τρϊσὶν ἡμέραις, ἀνακαλῶν καὶ ἀνακαλύπτων τὸν ἐλ
πιζόμενον· τότε ὁ δῆμος ὁρῶν καὶ ἀκούων τ(ὴν) τοῦ κηρύγματος βρον –
τόδη φωνὴν ἐκπλαγήσονται· καὶ ἐξεστηκότες ἅμα τῇ χαρᾶ καὶ τῷ
φόβῳ βοήσουσιν ἀγνοεῖν τὸν ἐλπιζόμενον· τότε ὁρώντων πάντων, καὶ τὸ
κ(ύρι)ε
ἐλέησον θερμῶς ἐκτενῶς βοώντων· καὶ τὰ μέτοπα αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν γῆν
κρούσαντες· καὶ χοῦν εἰς τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν πάσαντες καὶ στενά
ξαντες καὶ δάκρυα χύσαντες, διὰ τὴν ἐπιοῦσαν αὐτοῖς θλῖψιν· παρα
κληθήσεται τὸ θεῖον καὶ εὐμενῶς προσδέξαι τ(ὴν) δέησιν αὐτῶν· καὶ ἱλέῳ
ὄμματι ἐπιβλέψει ἐπὶ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν γῆν· διὰ τοὺς κατα
ληφθέντας τότε ἐκλεκτοὺς γνωσθήσεται ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς· ὁραθήσεται
ἐν τῷ οὐ(ρα)νῷ νεφῶδες στερέωμα τοῦ ἡλίου· ἔχων τὸ μέγεθος ὥσπερ
ἅλωνος θερινῆς ἁλῶν τῶν βοῶν ἓξ, κάτωθεν δὲ κρεμασθήσεται
στ(αυ)ρὸς, εὐωνύμως δὲ τοῦ στ(αυ)ροῦ τοῦ πορφύρου, ἐκτεταμένον τόξον, οἷον
διέθετο τοῖς π(ατ)ρᾶσιν ἡμῶν εἰς διαθήκην αἰώνιον· ἀγνοούντων
δὲ πάντων τὸν ἐλπιζόμενον, ἀνακλασθήσεται τὸ τόξον διὰ τοῦ νω –
τιαίου μέρους, ὅ ἐστιν ἐντηλούμενον ἐν τῷ ὑλήματι τοῦ οὐ(ρα)νοῦ καὶ
πληρωθήσεται τὸ πέρας τῆς σκηνῆς ἕως τοῦ ἀνελπίστου· καὶ δει
χθήσεται τῇ θέσει τῆς καλιᾶς τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ βασιλέως· τότε οἱ λαοὶ
δόντες δόξαν τῷ θ(ε)ῷ δρομαίως σπεύσουσιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ τό
ξου· καὶ λαβόντες τὸν πολυτίμητον καὶ γηραιὸν ἀνακτωρίδην
μετὰ λαμπάδων καὶ βαΐων καὶ ὠφραδῶν· ὅτι ποικίλως φέρουσι
αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ μεγάλη σιὼν· καὶ ὅταν (δὲ) ἔλθη ὁ ἀληθινὸς βασιλεὺς ἀπέ
ναντι τῆς καλιᾶς αὐτοῦ ἀναμέσων δύο ἀψίδων καὶ ἰνδάλματος ἐ
φ' ὕψους ἱσταμένου, ὁ φανεὶς ἀστὴρ ἀπὸ τοῦ δεξιοῦ μέρους τοῦ στ(αυ)ροῦ ἐκχυ
θήσεται καὶ δώσει αὐτὸν εἰς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ χρίσει αὐτὸν φῶς νοερ(όν)·
καὶ ὁ κήρυξ βροντοφωνῶν καὶ μὴ φαινόμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐ(ρα)νοῦ πρὸ(ς)
τὸν λαὸν εἶπη· ἀρεστὸς ὑμῖν οὗτος ἐστὶ; τότε λήψεται πάντας φό –
βος καὶ τρόμος καὶ ἔκστασις εἰς τὴν τοῦ κηρύγματος βροντιαίαν

109 τρϊσίν *A*: τρίσιν *La*. **110/111** βροντόδη *A*: βροντώδη *La*. **111** χαρᾶ *A*: χαρᾷ *La*. **113** γῆν: *-ὴν (-ὸν?) antea compendi factum scriba solvit*. **120** βοῶν *A*: βωῶν *La*. **121** στα υρός *A*: στρατός *La* | εὐωνύμως *A*: ἀωνύμως *La* | σταυροῦ *A*: στρατοῦ *La*. **122** πατρᾶσιν *A*: πράγμασιν *La* | ἀγνοούντων *A*: ἀγνούντων *La*. **124** ὅ ἐστιν *A*: ὁ ἔστιν *La* | ἐντηλούμενον *A*: εὐτηλούμενον *La* | ὑλήματι *A*: εἰλήματι *La*. **125** πληρωθήσεται τὸ πέρας τῆς σκηνῆς ἕως τοῦ ἀνελπίστου· καί *omittit La*. **126** θέσει *A*: θήσει *La*. **129** φέρουσι *A*: φέρουσαν *La*. **130** μεγάλη σιών *A*: μεγάλησι ὧν *La*. **131/ 132** ἐφ' ὕψους *A*: ἐφίψους *La qui in annotationibus* ἐφίπτου *vel* ἐφ' ὕψους *suspicatur*. **132** σταυροῦ *A*: στρατοῦ *La*. **134** βροντοφωνῶν *A*: βροντοφονῶν *La*. **135** λήψεται *A*: λήψεσθαι *La*.

clearly in those three days, calling up and revealing the hoped one.
110 And then the people, when seeing and hearing the thunderous[1] voice of
the message, will be astonished. And in their astonishment, both in joy[2] and in fear,
they will cry that they do not know the hoped one. Then, while looking up and,
crying out the 'Kyrie
113 eleison' fervently and assiduously, they will all beat their foreheads[3]
against the ground, sprinkle dust over their heads, heave
115 sighs and shed tears for the grief that is coming over them.
And then the deity will relent and hear[4] their prayer benevolently and He will
look upon the inhabitants of the earth with a merciful eye. Thanks to the chosen
who have remained[5] by then, he will be recognized as the chosen one. In the sky
amidst clouds the celestial body of the sun will appear, having[6] the size
120 of a summer threshing floor [fit] for six threshing oxen[7]. Underneath it a cross
will be hanging and, to the left of the purple cross, [there will be] a vast rainbow,
as He agreed upon in the everlasting covenant with our fathers[8]. And as
they are all unaware of [the whereabouts of] the hoped-for, the rainbow will bend
backwards down
124 its spine, which is set in a curve[9] against the vault of heaven[10].
125 And then the entire tabernacle will fill itself as far as [the place where] the unexpected
one [hides] – and
126 he will be shown at the place of the dwelling of the true emperor. Then the masses,
praising God, will hasten hurriedly towards the end of the rainbow
in order to receive the highly respected and aged monarch[11]
with torches and palm branches and songs of praise[12], for they will bring him
130 with various kinds [of honour] to the great[13] Sion. And when the true emperor
will appear[14] in front of his dwelling between two arches[15] and a statue standing
on a pedestal, the star that appeared on the right side of the cross will spread
out and will hand him over [to the people] and anoint him with spiritual light.
And the herald, with a thunderous voice, but invisible, will say[16] to the people
135 from heaven above: "Is this one to your liking?" Then they will all be overcome
by fear and terror and bewilderment upon hearing the thunderous voice of the

[1] Read βροντώδη. [2] Read χαρᾷ. [3] Read μέτωπα. [4] For προσδέξαι read προσδέξεται. [5] Read καταλειφθέντας. [6] Read ἔχον [7] Read ἁλοώντων βοῶν. [8] Cf. *Gen.* 9, 12-17. [9] For ἐντηλούμενον read ἀντειλούμενον. [10] Read εἰλήματι. [11] Read ἀνακτορίδην. [12] We were not able to interpret the word ὠφραδῶν. [13] Read μεγάλη. [14] Read ἔλθη. [15] Read ἀψίδων. [16] Read εἶπη.

φωνὴν· καὶ εἶθ' οὕτως τύπτοντες τὰ στήθη μετὰ δακρύων καὶ στεναγμῶν,
τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐ(ρα)νὸν ἄραντες εἴπωσι· ναὶ κ(ύρι)ε ὅτι σὺ ἔδωκας αὐτὸν ἀ
ρεστὸς ἡμῖν ἐστὶ· καὶ προσκυνήσαντες αὐτὸν ἀνάξουσιν αὐτὸν εἰς
τὴν μεγάλην σιὼν· καὶ προσευξάμενος καὶ σφραγίσας τὰς πύλας
ἀνοιχθήσονται, εὐστρεμένων πάντων καὶ ὁρώντων· οἱ δὲ ἐκεῖσε ὄντες
φύγωσϊ μετὰ πολλοῦ τοῦ φόβου· καὶ προσευξάμενοι ἀναβιβάσαν
τες ἐφ' ὑψηλοῦ τόπου καλέσωσιν αὐτὸν βασιλέα ἔχοντα αὐτὸν ἐκ
γένους· εἶθ' οὕτως ὑμνήσαντες ὑποστρέψαντες οἴκαδε· κ(αὶ) οὕτως
ἄξουσιν ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ νυκτὸς· καὶ ἀλλοιωθήσονται τὰ σημεῖα
ὁδηγήσουσι δὲ αὐτὸν, καὶ δύο ἄγγελοι ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀν(θρώπ)ου λευκο –
φόρου εὐνούχου· καὶ εἰς τὰ ὦτα αὐτοῦ λαλήσουσι τὶ μέλλει
πράττειν· πολλοὶ δὲ ἐπ' αὐτὸν θελήσαντες ἐπιβαλεῖν τὰς χεῖ
ρας, οὐκ ἐπιβάλλουσι, βλέποντες τὰ σημεῖα καὶ κρατούμενοι
ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἴπωσιν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· οὗτος ἐστὶν οὗ ἠκούο
μεν χρηστὸν κ(υρίο)υ· πάντες δὲ οἰκείαις σειραῖς σφιγγόμενοι
τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ παρανομιῶν αὐτῶν τε ἐνδόξων ὀνομάτ(ων)
καὶ τῶν τοὺς φόρους τελούντων σὺν ἱερεῦσιν ἀσεβεστάτοις· πολλοὶ δὲ
ἀποδράσουσιν εἰς τοὺς φραγγώδεις τόπους καὶ στραγγαλλιώδεις
τῆς οἰκουμένης· καὶ πάντες δοξάσαντες τὸν θ(εὸ)ν ἠρεμήσουσιν·
ἀνὴρ δὲ τῶν τῆς ἀνατολῆς· τῷ καὶ τῇ τύχῃ περιφανὴς· ἀπὸ
πενίας καὶ αὐτὸς ὢν καὶ ἐκ δόξης εἰς δόξαν μεταβαίνων τῆς
ἐναρέτου πολιτείας· εἰς ἄκρον μετερχόμενος πολὺς τωοντι
καὶ ταῖς θρηξὶ λάμπων· καὶ ἐλπίδα ἔχων τοῦ ἀοράτου θ(εο)ῦ·
παρ' ὅμοιος τῷ πτωχῷ καὶ ἐκλεκτὸς· καὶ αὐτὸς τῆς ἄνω κλήσ(εω)ς
τοῦ φωτὸς τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ ἐμφορηθεὶς:

† ἡ τοιαύτη γραφὴ μετεγράφη ἀπὸ παλαιώτατον βιβλίον ὡς λέγ(εται)
εἶναι γραφὴ χρόνων ϋ̄ καὶ ἐπέκεινα: †

137 τύπτοντες *A*: τύπτοντος *La* | μετά *A*: μητά *La* | στεναγμῶν *A*: στρεναγμῶν *La*. **145** παλατίῳ *A*: κολατίῳ *La*. **146/147** λευκοφόρου *A*: λακοφόρου *La*. **147** εὐνούχου *A*: ἀνούχου *La*. **150** οὗτος ἐστίν *A*: *omittit La*. **151** σφιγγόμενοι *A*: σφίγγομεν οἱ *La*. **153** ἀσεβεστάτοις *A*: ἀσεβεστάτους *La*. **154** φραγγώδεις *A*: φαγγώδεις *La* | στραγγαλλιώδεις *A*: στραγγαλιώδεις *La*. **156** τύχῃ *A*: τύχῃ *La*. **158** ἐναρέτου *A*: ἐν ἀρέτου *La* | μετερχόμενος *A*: μετρεχόμενος *La* | τωοντι *A*: τωόντι *La*. **160** κλήσεως *A*: κλησίας *La*. **162/163** *omittit La, qui addit* ΤΕΛΟΣ.

message. And then, beating their breasts [and weeping] with tears and sighs,
their hands raised towards heaven, they will say: "Yes, Lord, since Thou hast given
him, he is to our liking". And they will worship him and then lead him
to the great Sion. He will say a prayer and make the sign of the cross before the gates
and then they will open, while all gather together[1] and watch. Those who
are present there
will flee in great fear, and worshipping him and elevating him
to a high place, they will proclaim him emperor, him who has this place by reason
of birth. Afterwards they will sing hymns and return homewards. And thus
they will lead him by night into the palace. The signs will change and will
guide him, and [there will be] two angels resembling men dressed in white, eunuchs,
and they will speak into his ears [telling him] what he must
do. Although many long to lay their hands upon him,
they [will] not do so, as they see the signs and as they are warded off
by the angels, and[2] they will say to themselves: "He is the one about whom we heard
that he is the Lord's Anointed[3]". And they will all be caught in the cords
of their sins[4] and transgressions, both those who belong to the illustrious families
and those who pay taxes, as well as the most impious priests. Many
will flee to the earth's meandering[5] places with many ravines[6].
And all will praise the Lord and find peace.
And a man from the East, famous for his <...> and his good fortune,
of humble birth as well, will climb up from obscurity[7] to the glory of a virtuous
life. On his way to the top he is truly[8] formidable.
His hair is radiant. He places his hopes on the invisible God.
He resembles[9] the poor [emperor] and is the chosen one. He is full of the
heavenly vocation of the light of God.

[[This writing was copied from an ancient book. It is said
to be at least four hundred years old.]]

[1] For εὐστρεμένων read συστρεφομένων. [2] For ἐν read δ' ἐν. [3] Read χριστόν. [4] Cf. *Prov.* 5, 22. [5] Read στραγγαλιώδεις. [6] Read φαραγγώδεις. [7] Read ἐξ ἀδοξίας; cf. Orac. XVI, 2. [8] Read τῷ ὄντι [9] Read παρόμοιος.

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† ἅπαξ εἰρημένον
‡ rare word
(?) corrupt word

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